

## CHARTER SCHOOL PERFORMANCE CERTIFICATE

This Performance Certificate (“Certificate”) is executed on **June 8, 2023**, by and between the Idaho Public Charter School Commission (the “Authorizer”) and **INSPIRE Academics Inc.** (the “Charter Holder”) for the purpose of operating **INSPIRE Academics Inc., commonly referred to as INSPIRE Connections Academy**, (the “School”), an independent public school organized as an Idaho nonprofit corporation and established under the Public Charter Schools Act of 1998, Idaho Code section 33-5201 *et seq.*, as amended (the “Charter Schools Act”).

### RECITALS

WHEREAS, **INSPIRE Academics Inc.** is a non-profit entity incorporated with a board of directors; and

WHEREAS, on **April 14, 2005**, the Authorizer approved a charter petition for the establishment of the School; and

WHEREAS, the School began operations in the year **2006**; and

WHEREAS, the School’s charter was renewed on **March 1, 2018**, for a five-year term of operations,

WHEREAS, on **February 23, 2023**, the Authorizer conditionally renewed the School’s charter for a subsequent five-year term of operations to begin July 1, 2023 and end on June 30, 2028.

NOW THEREFORE in consideration of the foregoing recitals and the mutual understandings contained herein, the Authorizer and **INSPIRE Academics Inc.** agree as follows:

### SECTION 1: TERMS OF AUTHORIZATION

- A. Establishment of School.** The Charter Holder is hereby authorized to implement at the School the program described in the Charter, attached to this Certificate as Appendix C and incorporated herein by this reference. Any significant changes to any section of the Charter, including the educational program, facilities plan, financial plan, or the management plan, during the School’s pre-operational period or first operational term shall be treated as an amendment in accordance with the Authorizer’s policy.
- B. Term of Agreement.** The School’s operational term shall be from July 1, **2023** and end on June 30, **2028**. Subsequent terms of operation may be issued by the Authorizer in accordance with Idaho Code and Authorizer policy.
- C. Renewal Conditions.** The School is conditionally approved to operate. Applicable conditions are attached as Appendix B and incorporated herein by this reference. If all renewal conditions have been completed to the satisfaction of the Authorizer by the stated due date, the School shall continue operations through the remainder of the current Certificate term. In the event that all

renewal conditions have not been completed to the satisfaction of the Authorizer by the stated due date, the Authorizer will consider whether to exercise its authority to revoke the School's Charter at its next regularly scheduled meeting.

## SECTION 2: EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

- A. School Mission.** The mission of the School is as follows: To help each student maximize his or her potential and meet the highest performance standards. Connections Academy is a high-quality, high-tech, high-touch "school without walls" that brings out the best in every student.
- B. Grades Served.** The School may serve students in grades Kindergarten through 12.
- C. Design Elements.** The School shall implement and maintain the following essential design elements of its educational program:
- Implementation of Personalized Learning Plans (PLPs) designed collaboratively by teachers, parents and students to support each student's personal and/or academic growth. This can be measured via PLP review.
  - Ensuring appropriate one-on-one student/teacher/guardian or learning coach interaction for elementary (K-5) students, the minimum interaction frequency will be bi-monthly. This can be measured via observation and calendar review.
  - For secondary (6-12) students, the minimum will be eight (8) times per school year. This can be measured via observation and calendar review.
  - Weekly live lessons will be consistently available to all students. This can be measured via observation and calendar review.
  - Fostering collaborative staff teamwork through a Professional Learning Community (PLC) model. This can be measured via document review.
  - Providing enhanced learning through online technology. This can be measured via observation.
- D. Standardized Testing.** Students of the School shall be tested with the same standardized tests as other Idaho public school students.
- E. Accreditation.** The School shall be accredited as provided by rule of the State Board of Education. The School shall be accredited or appropriately credentialed by Cognia. All reports issued to the School from the accrediting agency shall be submitted to the Authorizer within five days of receipt.

## SECTION 3: SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

- A. Governing Board.** The School shall be governed by a non-profit board of directors (the "Board") incorporated by the Charter Holder. The Board shall serve as public agents authorized by the Authorizer, in a manner that is consistent with the terms of this Certificate, so long as such provisions are in accordance with state and federal laws, rules and regulations. The Board shall have final authority with respect to the School's operation, and shall have the responsibility of overseeing academic achievement, financial stability, and operational management of the School. The Charter Holder shall also be responsible for maintaining and enforcing a compliant Board and providing overall Board stewardship for the School.

- B. Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws.** The articles of incorporation and bylaws of the Charter Holder shall provide for governance of the operation of the School as a nonprofit corporation and a public charter school, and shall at all times be consistent with all applicable laws, rules, regulations, and this Certificate. The Charter Holder shall notify the Authorizer of any modification to the articles of incorporation or bylaws within five business days of approval by the Charter Holder.
- C. Charter Board Composition.** The composition of the Board shall at all times be determined by and consistent with the articles of incorporation and bylaws, and all applicable laws, rules, regulations, and policies. The Charter Holder shall notify the Authorizer of any changes to its composition and provide an amended School Leadership Roster within five business days of it taking effect.

#### SECTION 4: AUTHORIZER ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Oversight Allowing Autonomy.** The Authorizer’s role shall be to evaluate the School’s performance outcomes according to this Certificate and the Performance Framework, and shall be to provide compliance oversight. The Authorizer shall comply with the provisions of the Charter Schools Act and the terms of this Certificate in a manner that does not unduly inhibit the autonomy of the School.
- B. Charter School Performance Framework.** The Charter School Performance Framework (“Performance Framework”) is attached and incorporated into this agreement as Appendix A. The Performance Framework shall be used to annually evaluate the School’s academic achievement, Board stewardship, operational management, and financial stability. The specific terms of the Performance Framework are determined by the Authorizer and shall be binding on the School.
- C. Separate Academic Evaluations.** The aggregated K-12 virtual program and the virtual-alternative program shall each be evaluated separately with regard to the academic section of the Performance Framework.
- D. Identified Comparison Group.** For purposes of evaluating the School against the metrics and measures established in the Performance Framework, the School’s comparison group shall be identified as described below and shall be established for the length of the Certificate term.
- i. The comparison group for the School’s virtual program shall include all virtual schools operating in Idaho (excluding the School’s virtual program).
  - ii. The comparison group for the School’s virtual-alternative program shall include all alternative schools operating in Idaho (excluding the School’s virtual-alternative program).
- E. Authorizer to Monitor School Performance.** The Authorizer shall monitor and report on the School’s progress in relation to the indicators, measures, metrics, and targets set out in the Performance Framework. A formal report of the School’s academic, financial, and operational performance (“Performance Report”) shall be provided to the school and the public by the Authorizer annually. Data necessary to conduct this evaluation will be collected throughout the year. Additional reviews may be necessary if compliance concerns arise.
- F. School Performance.** The School shall meet standard on all measures of the Performance

Framework. The Authorizer shall renew any charter in which the School met all the terms of its Certificate, including all appendices, at the time of renewal.

- G. Performance Framework as Basis for Renewal of Charter.** The School's performance in relation to the Performance Framework shall provide the basis upon which the Authorizer shall decide whether to renew the School's Charter at the end of the Certificate term.
- H. Required Reports.** The School shall prepare and submit reports as required by the Authorizer's policy.
- I. Authorizer's Right to Review.** The Authorizer maintains the right to request and review additional documentation if such becomes necessary in the course of regular oversight duties or to investigate the validity of a compliance concern. The Authorizer shall conduct its reviews in a manner that does not unduly inhibit the autonomy granted to the School.
- J. Site Visits.** The Authorizer may conduct site visits in accordance with the Authorizer's policy. Reports from any site visit shall be made available to the School and shall be included in the School's annual Performance Report.

## SECTION 5: SCHOOL OPERATIONS

- A. In General.** The School and the Charter Holder shall operate at all times in accordance with all federal and state laws, rules, regulations, local ordinances, and Authorizer policies applicable to public charter schools.
- A. Maximum Enrollment.** The maximum number of students who may be enrolled in the School, across all programs, shall be 2150.
- B. Equitable Enrollment Procedures.** The School shall make student recruitment, admissions, enrollment, and retention decisions in a nondiscriminatory manner and without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, sex, marital status, religion, ancestry, disability or need for special education services. In no event may the School limit admission based on race, ethnicity, national origin, disability, gender, income level, athletic ability, or proficiency in the English language. If there are more applications to enroll in the School than there are spaces available, the School shall select students to attend using a random selection process that shall be publicly noticed and open to the public.
  - i. Calendar.** The School shall operate on a traditional nine-month calendar in which the last day of the regular term shall fall on or before June 30
  - ii.** The School will offer a summer school session for the purpose of acceleration and/or credit recovery.
- B. School Facilities.** The School shall operate at the following location(s): 600 N. Steelhead Way, Suite 164, Boise, ID 83704. The School shall provide the Authorizer with facilities documentation, including occupancy permits, fire marshal reports, building inspection reports, and health department reports for any facility newly occupied by the School, and any remodeling or construction project for which such documentation is necessary in accordance with Authorizer policy and in accordance with law, rule, regulations, and authorizer policy.
- C. Attendance Area.** The School's primary attendance area shall be used for the purposes of determining applicability of this enrollment preference category. The School's primary attendance area is as follows: State of Idaho.

- D. Staff.** Instructional staff shall be certified as provided by rule of the State Board of Education. All full-time staff members of the School shall be covered by the Public Employee Retirement System of Idaho, federal social security, unemployment insurance, worker's compensation insurance, and health insurance.
- E. Alignment with All Applicable Law.** The School shall comply with all applicable federal and state laws, rules, and regulations. In the event any such laws, rules, or regulations are amended, the School shall be bound by any such amendment upon the effective date of said amendment.

## SECTION 6: SCHOOL FINANCE

- A. General.** The School shall comply with all applicable financial and budget laws, rules, regulations, and financial reporting requirements, as well as the requirements contained in the School's Performance Framework.
- B. Financial Controls.** At all times, the Charter Holder shall ensure that the School maintains appropriate governance, managerial procedures, and financial controls, which shall include, but not be limited to: (1) commonly accepted accounting practices and the capacity to implement them; (2) a checking account; (3) adequate payroll procedures; (4) procedures for the creation and review of monthly and quarterly financial reports, which procedures shall specifically identify the individual who will be responsible for preparing such financial reports in the following fiscal year; (5) internal control procedures for cash receipts, cash disbursements and purchases; and (6) maintenance of asset registers and financial procedures for grants, all in accordance with state and federal laws, rules, regulations, and Authorizer policy.
- C. Financial Audit.** The School shall submit audited financial statements from an independent auditor to the Authorizer no later than November 1 of each year.
- D. Annual Budgets.** The School shall adopt a budget for each fiscal year, prior to the beginning of the fiscal year. The budget shall be in the Idaho Financial Accounting Reporting Management Systems (IFARMS) format or any other format as may be reasonably requested by the Authorizer.

## SECTION 7: TERMINATION, NON-RENEWAL AND REVOCATION

- A. Relinquishment.** Should the Charter Holder choose to relinquish its Charter before the expiration of this Certificate, it may do so upon written notice to the Authorizer. In such a case, the Authorizer's closure protocol shall begin immediately following written notification.
- B. Nonrenewal.** The Authorizer may non-renew the Charter at the expiration of the Certificate if the School failed to meet one or more of the terms of its Certificate, including the Performance Framework. The Charter Holder may appeal a decision to non-renew directly to the State Board of Education.
- C. Revocation.** The School's Charter may be revoked by the Authorizer if the School has failed to meet one or more of the renewal conditions, included in Appendix B, by the stated due date. The School's Charter may be revoked as provided by Idaho Code section 33-5209C. In such an event, the Authorizer shall consider whether to revoke the School's Charter at its next regularly scheduled meeting. The decision shall be made at that time. The Charter Holder may appeal a decision to revoke directly to the State Board of Education.

**D. Closure.** The Authorizer’s closure protocol shall begin immediately after a decision to relinquish is made by the Charter Holder, or a decision to revoke or non-renew or is made by the Authorizer. Closure protocol shall begin regardless of whether the Charter Holder appeals the decision. In the event that closure protocol begins, the School shall cease operations no later than the following June 30. Closure protocol shall only cease if the State Board of Education overturns the Authorizer’s decision.

**SECTION 8: MISCELLANEOUS**

- A. No Employee or Agency Relationship.** None of the provisions of this Certificate will be construed to create a relationship of agency, representation, joint venture, partnership, ownership, or employment between the Authorizer and the School.
- B. Additional Services.** Except as may be expressly provided in this Certificate, as set forth in any subsequent written agreement between the School and the Authorizer, or as may be required by law, neither the School nor the Authorizer shall be entitled to the use of or access to the services, supplies, or facilities of the other.
- C. No Third-Party Beneficiary.** This Certificate shall not create any rights in any third parties, nor shall any third party be entitled to enforce any rights or obligations that may be possessed by either party to this Certificate.
- D. Amendment.** This Certificate may be amended by agreement between the School and the Authorizer in accordance with Authorizer policy. All amendments must be in writing and signed by the School and the Authorizer.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Authorizer and the Charter Holder have executed this Performance Certificate to be effective **June 8, 2023.**

*Alan L Reed*  
Alan L Reed (Jun 16, 2023 08:01 MDT)

Jun 16, 2023

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**Chairman**  
**Idaho Public Charter School Commission**

*Rebecca P Valentine*  
Rebecca P Valentine (Jun 15, 2023 12:09 MDT)

Jun 15, 2023

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**Chairman**  
**INSPIRE Academics Inc. Governing Board**

**Appendix A: Performance Framework**

**Appendix B: Conditions**

**Appendix C: Charter**

**Appendix D: IPCSC Closure Protocol**

Appendix A: Performance Framework



PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK GUIDANCE: ACADEMIC MEASURES

*Adopted 8/13/2020*

*Revised 4/14/2022*

Idaho Public Charter School Commission

514 W Jefferson, Suite 303

Boise, Idaho 83720

Phone: (208)332-1561

[pcsc@osbe.idaho.gov](mailto:pcsc@osbe.idaho.gov)

Alan Reed, Chairman

Jenn Thompson, Director

# ACADEMIC MEASURES

## All School Measures

1. Math Proficiency
2. ELA Proficiency
3. Math Growth
4. ELA Growth
5. Literacy Proficiency
6. College and Career Readiness

Comparison Group: Specific to school.

# 1. MATH PROFICIENCY

**Proficiency Rate:** The IPCSC will use the proficiency rates as determined by the Idaho Accountability Framework and reported via the Idaho Report Card.

Math and ELA Proficiency Rubric	
Exceeds Standard	The school's proficiency rate is greater than one standard deviation above the mean of the identified comparison group, <b>OR</b> The school's proficiency average is in 90 <sup>th</sup> percentile of all Idaho schools.
Meets Standard	<b>The school's proficiency rate is equal to the mean or falls between the mean and one standard deviation above the mean of the identified comparison group.</b>
Approaches Standard	The school's proficiency rate falls between the mean and one standard deviation below the mean of the identified comparison group.
Does Not Meet Standard	The school's proficiency rate is more than one standard deviation below the mean of the identified comparison group, <b>OR</b> the school has been identified for comprehensive or targeted support for three consecutive years as per the Idaho Consolidated Plan.

## 2. ELA PROFICIENCY

**Proficiency Rate:** The IPCSC will use the proficiency rates as determined by the Idaho Accountability Framework and reported via the Idaho Report Card.

<b>Math and ELA Proficiency Rubric</b>	
Exceeds Standard	The school's proficiency rate is greater than one standard deviation above the mean of the identified comparison group, <b>OR</b> The school's proficiency average is in 90 <sup>th</sup> percentile of all Idaho schools.
<b>Meets Standard</b>	<b>The school's proficiency rate is equal to the mean OR Falls between the mean and one standard deviation above the mean of the identified comparison group.</b>
Approaches Standard	The school's proficiency rate falls between the mean and one standard deviation below the mean of the identified comparison group.
Does Not Meet Standard	The school's proficiency rate is more than one standard deviation below the mean of the identified comparison group, <b>OR</b> the school has been identified for comprehensive or targeted support for three consecutive years as per the Idaho Consolidated Plan.

### 3. MATH GROWTH

**Growth Rate:** The IPCSC will use the proficiency rates as determined by the Idaho Accountability Framework and reported via the Idaho Report Card.

Growth Rubric Math	
Exceeds Standard	The percentage of students in grades 3-8 who did not achieve proficiency on the current year's assessment but who did make adequate growth toward proficiency is greater than one standard deviation above the mean of the identified comparison group, <b>OR</b> The school's growth rate is in the 90 <sup>th</sup> percentile of all Idaho public schools.
Meets Standard	<b>The percentage of students in grades 3-8 who did not achieve proficiency on the current year's assessment but who did make adequate growth toward proficiency is equal to the mean or falls between the mean and one standard deviation above the mean of the identified comparison group, OR The growth rate increased by at least 10% over the previous year.</b>
Approaches Standard	The percentage of students in grades 3-8 who did not achieve proficiency on the current year's assessment but who did make adequate growth toward proficiency falls between the mean and one standard deviation below the mean of the identified comparison group.
Does Not Meet Standard	The percentage of students in grades 3-8 who did not achieve proficiency on the current year's assessment made adequate growth toward proficiency is more than one standard deviation below the mean of the identified comparison group.

## 4. ELA GROWTH

**Growth Rate:** The IPCSC will use the proficiency rates as determined by the Idaho Accountability Framework and reported via the Idaho Report Card.

Growth Rubric ELA	
Exceeds Standard	The percentage of students in grades 3-8 who did not achieve proficiency on the current year's assessment but who did make adequate growth toward proficiency is greater than one standard deviation above the mean of the identified comparison group, <b>OR</b> The school's growth rate is in the 90 <sup>th</sup> percentile of all Idaho public schools.
Meets Standard	<b>The percentage of students in grades 3-8 who did not achieve proficiency on the current year's assessment but who did make adequate growth toward proficiency is equal to the mean or falls between the mean and one standard deviation above the mean of the identified comparison group, OR The growth rate increased by at least 10% over the previous year.</b>
Approaches Standard	The percentage of students in grades 3-8 who did not achieve proficiency on the current year's assessment but who did make adequate growth toward proficiency falls between the mean and one standard deviation below the mean of the identified comparison group.
Does Not Meet Standard	The percentage of students in grades 3-8 who did not achieve proficiency on the current year's assessment made adequate growth toward proficiency is more than one standard deviation below the mean of the identified comparison group.

## 5. LITERACY PROFICIENCY

**Literacy Proficiency Rate:** The IPCSC will use the proficiency rates as determined by the Idaho Accountability Framework and reported via the Idaho Report Card.

Literacy Proficiency Rubric	
Exceeds Standard	<p>One of the following is true:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school's proficiency rate on the spring administration of the statewide literacy assessment is greater than one standard deviation above the mean of the identified comparison group;</li> <li>• the school's proficiency rate on the spring administration of the statewide literacy assessment is at or above 90%;</li> </ul> <p><b>OR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The fall to spring change in proficiency rate is 20% or greater.</li> </ul>
Meets Standard	<p><b>The school's proficiency on the spring administration of the statewide literacy assessment is equal to the mean or within one standard deviation above the mean of the identified comparison group; OR The school's fall to spring change in proficiency rate is between 10%-19%.</b></p>
Approaches Standard	<p>The school's proficiency on the spring administration of the statewide literacy assessment falls within one standard deviation below the mean of the identified comparison group.</p>
Does Not Meet Standard	<p>The school's proficiency rate on the spring administration of the statewide literacy assessment is more than one standard deviation below the mean of the identified comparison group.</p>

## 6. COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

**Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate (ACGR):** Alternative schools will be evaluated based on their 5-Year ACGR. All other schools will be evaluated based on their 4-Year ACGR.

**Graduation Rate:** The IPCSC will use either the 4-Year ACGR as determined by the Idaho Accountability Framework and reported via the Idaho Report Card.

<b>C&amp;C Readiness Rubric</b>	
Exceeds Standard	The school's 4-Year ACGR is greater than one standard deviation above the identified comparison group, <b>OR</b> The school's ACGR is 90%.
<b>Meets Standard</b>	<b>The school's 4-Year ACGR is equal to the mean OR Falls between the mean and one standard deviation above the mean of the identified comparison group.</b>
Approaches Standard	The school's 4-Year ACGR falls between the mean and one standard deviation below the mean of the identified comparison group.
Does Not Meet Standard	The school's 4-Year ACGR is more than one standard deviation below the identified comparison group.

# OPERATIONAL MEASURES

## BOARD STEWARDSHIP

1. Governance Structure
2. Governance Oversight
3. Governance Compliance

## OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT

4. Student Services
5. Data Security and Information Transparency
6. Facility and Services
7. Operational Compliance

# BOARD GOVERNANCE

## 1. Governance Structure Rubric

**Data Sources:** Board bylaws, articles of incorporation, and any courtesy letters or notifications issued to the school by entities responsible for oversight or enforcement.

Governance Structure Rubric	
Exceeds Standard	The school has met standard for 3 or more consecutive years, including the most recently completed school year.
Meets Standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Board Bylaws are compliant with ID law.</b></li><li>• <b>Articles of Incorporation are current.</b></li><li>• <b>No investigations were conducted into either ethical behavior or conflict of interest regarding any board director.</b></li><li>• <b>The board did not experience an Open Meeting Law violation that needed to be cured this year.</b></li></ul>
Approaches Standard	The school was informed of or became aware of non-compliance and action to correct the issue was taken within 30 days.
Does Not Meet Standard	The school was informed of or became aware of non-compliance and action to correct the issue was not taken within 30 days.

## 2. Governance Oversight Rubric

**Data Sources:** Board meeting minutes, school policies, continuous improvement plan (or other strategic planning evidence if submitted by the school), and verification of submission of annual administrator evaluation.

Governance Oversight Rubric	
Exceeds Standard	The school has met standard for 3 or more consecutive years, including the most recently completed school year.
Meets Standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>The board reviews academic data in a timely and thorough manner.</b></li><li>• <b>The board reviews financial reports in a timely and thorough manner.</b></li><li>• <b>The board maintains compliant policies.</b></li><li>• <b>The board engages in strategic planning.</b></li><li>• <b>The board conducts a compliant annual evaluation of their school leader and/or management organization.</b></li></ul>
Approaches Standard	The school was informed of or became aware of non-compliance and action to correct the issue was taken within 30 days.
Does Not Meet Standard	The school was informed of or became aware of non-compliance and action to correct the issue was not taken within 30 days.

### 3. Governance Compliance Rubric

**Data Sources:** If applicable, courtesy letters/notifications of concerns, investigation, or findings issued to the school by entities responsible for oversight or enforcement, and any documentation of correction provided by the school.

Governance Compliance Rubric	
Exceeds Standard	The school has met standard for 3 or more consecutive years, including the most recently completed school year.
<b>Meets Standard</b>	<b>The IPCSC did not issue any courtesy letters or notify an external investigative body of compliance concerns this year.</b>
Approaches Standard	The school was informed of or became aware of non-compliance and action to correct the issue was taken within 30 days.
Does Not Meet Standard	The school was informed of or became aware of non-compliance and action to correct the issue was not taken within 30 days.

# OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT

## 4. Student Services Rubric

**Data Sources:** If applicable, any notifications or courtesy letters issued by the SDE or SBOE which required corrective action with regard to the school's ELL, SPED, or College and Career Readiness programs, as well as any documentation submitted by the school evidencing correction.

Student Services Rubric	
Exceeds Standard	The school has met standard for 3 or more consecutive years, including the most recently completed school year.
Meets Standard	<b>All of the following are true:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>The school's English Language Learner program is in good standing;</b></li><li>• <b>The school's Special Education program is in good standing; The school's college and career readiness program is in good standing; and</b></li><li>• <b>The school's federal programs are in good standing.</b></li></ul>
Approaches Standard	The school was informed of or became aware of non-compliance and action to correct the issue was taken within 30 days.
Does Not Meet Standard	The school was informed of or became aware of non-compliance and action to correct the issue was not taken within 30 days.

## 5. Data Security and Information Transparency Rubric

**Data Sources:** periodic desk audit of school website, and any formal notifications regarding data security or public records compliance.

Data Security and Information Transparency Rubric	
Exceeds Standard	The school has met standard for 3 or more consecutive years, including the most recently completed school year.
Meets Standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The school's website is compliant with I.C. 33-133(7) (data collection, access, and security policy); I.C. 33-320 (continuous improvement plan); and I.C. 33-357 (expenditures updated monthly, contracts, performance reports, and annual budgets).</b></li> <li>• <b>The school did not experience any issues involving data security this year.</b></li> <li>• <b>The school did not experience any compliance issue regarding public records requests this year.</b></li> </ul>
Approaches Standard	The school was informed of or became aware of non-compliance and action to correct the issue was taken within 30 days.
Does Not Meet Standard	The school was informed of or became aware of non-compliance and action to correct the issue was not taken within 30 days.

## 6. Facility and Services Rubric

**Data Sources:** Verification of meal service program and transportation services via public documents and/or school website, and any notifications of concerns regarding occupancy or safety issued to the school by entities responsible for oversight or enforcement.

Facility and Building Services Rubric	
Exceeds Standard	The school has met standard for 3 or more consecutive years, including the most recently completed school year.
Meets Standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The school's occupancy certificate is current.</b></li> <li>• <b>The school maintains current safety inspections and drills.</b></li> <li>• <b>The school provides daily transportation to students in compliance with Idaho Code. The school provides a compliant lunch program.</b></li> </ul>
Approaches Standard	The school was informed of or became aware of non-compliance and action to correct the issue was taken within 30 days.
Does Not Meet Standard	The school was informed of or became aware of non-compliance and action to correct the issue was not taken within 30 days.

## 7. Operational Compliance Rubric

**Data Sources:** Periodic observation of enrollment lottery, and if applicable, any corrective action plans issued by the SDE not related to special education, ELL, or college and career readiness (as these are captured elsewhere), or formal notification of late reports or enrollment violations.

Operational Compliance Rubric	
Exceeds Standard	The school has met standard for 3 or more consecutive years, including the most recently completed school year.
Meets Standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Required reports are submitted accurately and on time.</b></li><li>• <b>The school maintains a compliant enrollment process.</b></li><li>• <b>No correct action plans were issued by the SDE this year.</b></li></ul>
Approaches Standard	The school was informed of or became aware of non-compliance and action to correct the issue was taken within 30 days.
Does Not Meet Standard	The school was informed of or became aware of non-compliance and action to correct the issue was not taken within 30 days.

# FINANCIAL MEASURES

## NEAR TERM HEALTH

1. Current Ratio
2. Unrestricted Days Cash
3. Default
4. Enrollment Variance

## SUSTAINABLE HEALTH

5. Total Margin and 3Yr Aggregated Total Margin
6. Cash Flow and Multi-Year Cash Flow
7. Debt Service Coverage Ratio
8. Debt to Asset Ratio
9. Financial Compliance Rubric

## NEAR-TERM HEALTH

### 1. Current Ratio

Calculation: Current Assets divided by Current Liabilities

Data Source: Annual Fiscal Audit Report

Current Ratio Rubric	
Exceeds Standard	The school has a current ratio of more than 1.5
Meets Standard	<b>The school has a current ratio of at least 1.1 (or between 1.0 and 1.1 with a 1-year positive trend)</b>
Approaches Standard	The school has a current ratio of between .9 and 1.0 (or between 1.0 and 1.1 with a 1-year negative trend)
Does Not Meet Standard	The school has a current ratio of .9 or less.

### 2. Unrestricted Days Cash

Calculation: Unrestricted Cash and investments divided by ((Total Expenses minus Depreciation Expense) / 365)

Data Source: Annual Fiscal Audit Report

Unrestricted Days Cash Rubric	
Exceeds Standard	The school has more than 60 days cash on hand
Meets Standard	<b>The school has 60 days cash OR Between 30- and 60-days cash and one-year trend is positive.</b>  <b>*Note: Schools in their first or second year of operation must have a minimum of 30 days cash.</b>
Approaches Standard	The school has between 15-30 days cash <b>OR</b> Between 30-60 days cash, but one-year trend is negative.
Does Not Meet Standard	The school has fewer than 15 days cash on hand.

### 3. Default

**Calculation:** No calculation.

**Data Source:** Annual Fiscal Audit Report, Terms of Debt, Other Formal Notifications Received by School.

Default Rubric	
Exceeds Standard	The school has met standard for at least 3 consecutive years, including the most recently completed school year.
Meets Standard	<b>The school is not in default of any financial obligations and did not experience any instances of default during the fiscal year.</b> <b>Financial obligations include, but are not limited to, making payments to vendors and utility services on time, complying with all loan covenants, filing any reports required for maintenance of grants or philanthropic funds, meeting all tax obligations, and operating without financial judgements or property liens.</b>
Approaches Standard	The school experienced one or more instances of minor default during the fiscal year (such as making late payments); however, the school is not currently in default of any financial obligations.
Does Not Meet Standard	School is currently in default of financial obligations.

### 4. Enrollment Variance

**Calculation:** Actual enrollment as of the first Friday in November (drawn from ISEE) divided by enrollment projections as submitted directly to the IPCSC in July.

**Data Source:** ISEE and direct school report

Enrollment Variance Rubric	
Exceeds Standard	The school has met standard for at least 3 consecutive years, including the most recently completed school year.
Meets Standard	<b>Enrollment variance is equal to or greater than 95%.</b>
Approaches Standard	Enrollment variance was between 90% and 95%, <b>OR</b> The enrollment variance was less than 90% and the school provided a mid-year amended budget evidencing at least a break-even budget based on mid-term enrollment and any resulting revenue adjustments.
Does Not Meet Standard	Enrollment variance was less than 90% and the school did not provide evidence of mid-year budget amendments or operational changes evidencing at least a break-even budget based on mid-term enrollment and any resulting revenue adjustments.

## SUSTAINABLE HEALTH

### 5. Total Margin and 3Yr Aggregated Total Margin

#### Calculation:

Most Recent Year Total Margin: 2019 Net Income divided by 2019 Total Revenue.

3-Year Aggregated Total Margin: (2019 Net Income +2018 Net Income +2017 Net Income) divided by (2019 Total Revenue +2018 Total Revenue +2017 Total Revenue)

Data Source: Annual Fiscal Audit Report

Total Margin and 3-Yr Aggregated Total Margin	
Exceeds Standard	The school has met standard for 3 or more consecutive years, including the most recently completed school year.
Meets Standard	<p><b>Aggregated 3-year Total Margin is positive and the most recent year Total Margin is positive</b></p> <p><b>OR</b></p> <p><b>Aggregated 3-Year Total Margin is greater than -1.5 percent, the trend is positive for the last two years, and the most recent year Total Margin is positive.</b></p> <p><b>*Note: For schools in their first or second year of operation, the cumulative Total Margin must be positive.</b></p>
Approaches Standard	Aggregated 3-Year Total Margin is greater than -1.5 percent, but trend does not "Meet Standard".
Does Not Meet Standard	Aggregated 3-Year Total Margin is less than or equal to -1.5 percent <b>OR</b> The most recent year Total Margin is less than -10 percent.

## 6. Cash Flow and Multi-Year Cash Flow

Calculation (example years are included as reference):

Most Recent Year Cash Flow: 2020 Cash and Investments minus 2019 Cash and

Investments Previous Year Cash Flow: 2019 Cash and Investments minus 2018

Cash and Investments Multi-Year Cash Flow: 2020 Cash and Investments minus

2018 Cash and Investments

Data Source: Annual Fiscal Audit Report

Cash Flow and Multi-Year Cash Flow	
Exceeds Standard	The school has met standard for 3 or more consecutive years, including the most recently completed school year.
Meets Standard	<p><b>Multi-Year Cumulative Cash Flow is positive, and Cash Flow is positive in the most recent year is positive,</b></p> <p><b>OR</b></p> <p><b>Multi-Year Cumulative Cash Flow is negative, but documentation identifies this as a result of a one-time, planned purchase (such as a facility remodel).</b></p> <p><b>*Note: Schools in their first or second year of operation must have positive cash flow.</b></p>
Approaches Standard	Multi-Year Cumulative Cash Flow is positive, but Cash Flow is negative in the most recent year.
Does Not Meet Standard	Multi-Year Cumulative Cash Flow is negative, and no documentation identifies this as a result of a one-time, planned purchase.

## 7. Debt Service Coverage Ratio

### Calculation:

If school owns its facility or if the school leases its facility and the lease is capitalized:  
 (Net Income + Depreciation Expense + Interest Expense) divided by (Principal + Interest + Lease Payments)

If school leases its facility and the lease is not capitalized: (Facility Lease Payments + Net Income + Depreciation Expense + Interest Expense) divided by (Principal + Interest + Lease Payments)

Data Source: Annual Fiscal Audit Report

Debt Service Coverage Ratio Rubric	
Exceeds Standard	The school's debt service coverage ratio is 1.5 or greater <b>OR</b> The school operates debt-free.
<b>Meets Standard</b>	<b>Debt Service Coverage Ratio is between 1.1 and 1.49</b>
Approaches Standard	The school's debt service coverage ratio is between .9 and 1.09
Does Not Meet Standard	Debt Service Coverage Ratio is less than .9

## 8. Debt to Asset Ratio

Calculation: Total Liabilities divided by Total Assets

Data Source: Annual Fiscal Audit Report

Debt to Asset Ratio	
Exceeds Standard	The school has met standard for 3 consecutive years, including the most recently completed school year., <b>OR</b> The school operates debt-free.
<b>Meets Standard</b>	<b>The school's Debt to Asset Ratio is less than 0.9</b>
Approaches Standard	The school's Debt to Asset Ratio is between 0.9. and 1.0
Does Not Meet Standard	The school's Debt to Asset Ratio is greater than 1.0

## 9. Financial Compliance Rubric

Calculation: Total Liabilities divided by Total Assets

Data Source: Annual Fiscal Audit Report, Desk Audit of Policies, Other Formal Notifications Received by School

Financial Compliance Rubric	
Exceeds Standard	The school has met standard for 3 or more consecutive years, including the most recently completed school year.
Meets Standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Accounting Practices: finances are managed in compliance with GAAP.</b></li> <li>• <b>Financial Transparency: expenditures and contracts are posted on the school's site.</b></li> <li>• <b>Internal Controls: the school's internal controls are compliant.</b></li> </ul>
Approaches Standard	The school was informed of non-compliance with accounting practices, financial transparency, or internal controls, and prompt action to correct is in evidence.
Does Not Meet Standard	<p>The school is operating under a notification of fiscal concern or a notification of possible or imminent closure</p> <p><b>OR</b></p> <p>The school was informed of non-compliance with accounting practices, financial transparency, or internal controls and the issues were not corrected within 30 days.</p>



## PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK GUIDANCE: ALTERNATIVE MEASURES

*Adopted 8/13/2020*

*Revised 4/14/2022*

Idaho Public Charter School Commission

514 W Jefferson, Suite 303

Boise, Idaho 83720

Phone: (208)332-1561

[pcsc@osbe.idaho.gov](mailto:pcsc@osbe.idaho.gov)

Alan Reed, Chairman

Jenn Thompson, Director

# ADDITIONAL ACADEMIC MEASURES FOR ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS GRADES 6-12

## Standard Academic Measures

1. Math Proficiency
2. ELA Proficiency
3. College and Career Readiness (5yr ACGR)

In addition to the standard measures above, the following measures will apply to alternative programs.

## Alternative Program Measures

1. Math Content Mastery
2. ELA Content Mastery
3. Progress Toward Graduation
4. College and Career Readiness- Alternative

In order to be considered an alternative program, 100% of the students enrolled in the program must meet the statutory definition of “at-risk”.

**Comparison Group:** the comparison group for alternative programs includes all schools and IPCSC programs serving 100% at-risk student populations.

## MATH PROFICIENCY (Standard Measure)

**Proficiency Rate:** The IPCSC will use the proficiency rates as determined by the Idaho Accountability Framework and reported via the Idaho Report Card.

Math and ELA Proficiency Rubric	
Exceeds Standard	The school's proficiency rate is greater than one standard deviation above the mean of the identified comparison group, <b>OR</b> The school's proficiency average is in 90 <sup>th</sup> percentile of all Idaho schools.
Meets Standard	<b>The school's proficiency rate is equal to the mean or falls between the mean and one standard deviation above the mean of the identified comparison group.</b>
Approaches Standard	The school's proficiency rate falls between the mean and one standard deviation below the mean of the identified comparison group.
Does Not Meet Standard	The school's proficiency rate is more than one standard deviation below the mean of the identified comparison group, <b>OR</b> the school has been identified for comprehensive or targeted support for three consecutive years as per the Idaho Consolidated Plan.

## MATH CONTENT MASTERY ALTERNATIVE

**Note:** This measure will be considered in addition to the standard proficiency measure for schools classified as alternative. Non-alternative schools may include this measure as a mission specific goal, in addition to the standard measures, if they feel this data would help the IPCSC understand their school's academic outcomes.

Idaho graduation requirements only require math to be taken in three of the four years of high school. Alternative schools structure this requirement differently. For the purposes of this measure, the total number of continuously enrolled students will exclude students enrolled in a grade for which the school does not require math to be taken.

Alt Proficiency Rubric	
Exceeds Standard	The percentage of continuously enrolled students who have either already completed all ELA/Math graduation requirements or successfully earned credit for the equivalent of 1 year of instruction in the discipline (ELA or Math) is more than 10% above the school's percentage in the previous year, <b>OR</b> The percentage in the current year is greater than 80%.
Meets Standard	<b>The percentage of continuously enrolled students who have either already completed all ELA/Math graduation requirements OR Successfully earned credit for the equivalent of 1 year of instruction in the discipline (ELA or Math) is equal to or up to 10% greater than the school's percentage in the previous year.</b>
Approaches Standard	The percentage of continuously enrolled students who have either already completed all ELA/Math graduation requirements <b>OR</b> Successfully earned credit for the equivalent of 1 year of instruction in the discipline (ELA or Math) is below, but no more than 10% below, the school's percentage in the previous year.
Does Not Meet Standard	The percentage of continuously enrolled students who have either already completed all ELA/Math graduation requirements <b>OR</b> Successfully earned credit for the equivalent of 1 year of instruction in the discipline (ELA or Math) is more than 10% below the school's percentage in the previous year.

## ELA PROFICIENCY (Standard Measure)

**Proficiency Rate:** The IPCSC will use the proficiency rates as determined by the Idaho Accountability Framework and reported via the Idaho Report Card.

Math and ELA Proficiency Rubric	
Exceeds Standard	The school's proficiency rate is greater than one standard deviation above the mean of the identified comparison group, <b>OR</b> The school's proficiency average is in 90 <sup>th</sup> percentile of all Idaho schools.
Meets Standard	<b>The school's proficiency rate is equal to the mean OR Falls between the mean and one standard deviation above the mean of the identified comparison group.</b>
Approaches Standard	The school's proficiency rate falls between the mean and one standard deviation below the mean of the identified comparison group.
Does Not Meet Standard	The school's proficiency rate is more than one standard deviation below the mean of the identified comparison group, <b>OR</b> the school has been identified for comprehensive or targeted support for three consecutive years as per the Idaho Consolidated Plan.

## ELA CONTENT MASTERY ALTERNATIVE

Note: This measure will be considered in addition to the standard proficiency measure for schools classified as alternative. Non-alternative schools may include this measure as a mission specific goal, in addition to the standard measures, if they feel this data would help the IPCSC understand their school's academic outcomes.

Alt Proficiency Rubric	
Exceeds Standard	The percentage of continuously enrolled students who have either already completed all ELA/Math graduation requirements or successfully earned credit for the equivalent of 1 year of instruction in the discipline (ELA or Math) is more than 10% above the school's percentage in the previous year, <b>OR</b> The percentage in the current year is greater than 80%.
Meets Standard	<b>The percentage of continuously enrolled students who have either already completed all ELA/Math graduation requirements OR Successfully earned credit for the equivalent of 1 year of instruction in the discipline (ELA or Math) is equal to or up to 10% greater than the school's percentage in the previous year.</b>
Approaches Standard	The percentage of continuously enrolled students who have either already completed all ELA/Math graduation requirements <b>OR</b> successfully earned credit for the equivalent of 1 year of instruction in the discipline (ELA or Math) is below, but no more than 10% below, the school's percentage in the previous year.
Does Not Meet Standard	The percentage of continuously enrolled students who have either already completed all ELA/Math graduation requirements <b>OR</b> Successfully earned credit for the equivalent of 1 year of instruction in the discipline (ELA or Math) is more than 10% below the school's percentage in the previous year.

## 9-12 PROGRESS TOWARD GRADUATION ALTERNATIVE

Note: This measure will be considered in addition to the standard growth measure for schools classified as alternative. Non-alternative schools may include this measure as a mission specific goal, in addition to the standard measures, if they feel this data would help the IPCSC understand their school's academic outcomes.

For the purpose of this measure, a quarter of instructional enrollment will be calculated based on the number of instructional days reported and may be further modified by mutual agreement of the school and the IPCSC based on the alternative school's course completion structure.

Alt Growth Rubric	
Exceeds Standard	More than 75% of students enrolled in the alternative program earned 2.9 credits for every instructional quarter for which the student was enrolled for 90% of the days in that instructional quarter.
Meets Standard	Between 65% and 75% of students enrolled in the alternative program earned 2.9 credits for every instructional quarter for which the student was enrolled for 90% of the days in that instructional quarter falls, <b>OR</b> his percentage is less than 65% BUT at least 5% greater than in the previous year.
Approaches Standard	Less than 65% of students enrolled in the alternative program earned 2.9 credits for every instructional quarter for which the student was enrolled for 90% of the days in that instructional quarter AND this percentage is between 3% and 5% greater than the previous year.
Does Not Meet Standard	Less than 65% of students enrolled in the alternative program earned 2.9 credits for every instructional quarter for which the student was enrolled for 90% of the days in that instructional quarter AND this percentage is less than 3% greater than in the previous year.

## COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS (Standard Measure)

**Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate (ACGR):** Alternative schools will be evaluated based on their 5-Year ACGR. All other schools will be evaluated based on their 4-Year ACGR.

**Graduation Rate:** The IPCSC will use the 5-Year ACGR as determined by the Idaho Accountability Framework and reported via the Idaho Report Card.

<b>C&amp;C Readiness Rubric</b>	
Exceeds Standard	The school's 5-Year ACGR is greater than one standard deviation above the identified comparison group, <b>OR</b> The school's ACGR is 90%.
<b>Meets Standard</b>	<b>The school's 5-Year ACGR is equal to the mean OR Falls between the mean and one standard deviation above the mean of the identified comparison group.</b>
Approaches Standard	The school's 5-Year ACGR falls between the mean and one standard deviation below the mean of the identified comparison group.
Does Not Meet Standard	The school's 5-Year ACGR is more than one standard deviation below the identified comparison group.

## COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS – ALTERNATIVE

Note: This measure will be considered in addition to the standard college and career readiness measure for schools classified as alternative. Non-alternative schools may include this measure as a mission specific goal, in addition to the standard measures, if they feel this data would help the IPCSC understand their school’s academic outcomes.

<b>C&amp;C Readiness Rubric</b>	
Exceeds Standard	The percentage of the not continuously enrolled students who were enrolled for at least 45 days and were eligible to graduate in the same academic year (plus summer) who graduated is more than 10% above the school’s percentage in the previous year, <b>OR</b> The percentage in the current year is greater than 75%.
Meets Standard	<b>The percentage of the not continuously enrolled students who were enrolled for at least 45 days and were eligible to graduate in the same academic year (plus summer) who graduated is equal to OR Up to 10% greater than the school’s percentage in the previous year.</b>
Approaches Standard	The percentage of the not continuously enrolled students who were enrolled for at least 45 days and were eligible to graduate in the same academic year (plus summer) who graduated is below, but no more than 10% below the school’s percentage in the previous year.
Does Not Meet Standard	The percentage of the not continuously enrolled students who were enrolled for at least 45 days and were eligible to graduate in the same academic year (plus summer) who graduated is more than 10% below the school’s percentage in the previous year.

## Appendix B: Conditions

## Appendix B: Conditions of Renewal

1. Condition 1: Inspire’s alternative education program, Empower Connections Academy (Empower), must achieve a Meets Standard rating on the math proficiency measure of the Commission’s performance framework in fiscal year 2025. Since the corresponding data will be evaluated on or before November 15, 2025, the date by which this condition must be met is November 15, 2025.

Inspire scored 10% below the meets standard mark on this measure in fiscal year 2022. The math proficiency measure is defined in the performance framework and shall be incorporated into Inspire’s 2023-2028 performance certificate.

2. Condition 2: Inspire is no longer “exempt from some or all measures within the financial portion of the Performance Framework,” as stated in Inspire’s 2018-2022 performance certificate. The purpose of this condition is to ensure that the public has access to an annual performance report that provides complete and transparent information about Inspire’s financial outcomes. This condition must be met by July 1, 2023.
3. Condition 3: Inspire’s negotiated performance certificate shall include a maximum enrollment number not to exceed 2,150 students. However, Inspire will be permitted to request an increase in this enrollment number through the charter revision process. The purpose of this condition is to ensure budget predictability for all schools and to ensure that emergency growth decisions are made by the appropriate entity. This condition must be met by July 1, 2023.

## Appendix C: Charter



# INSPIRE

## Virtual Charter School Petition

Submitted to the  
Idaho Charter School Commission  
February 1, 2005  
(Revised March 2005)

(Revised March 2019)

Contact:

Karen Haines, Principal, INSPIRE  
600 N. Steelhead Way, Suite 164  
Boise, ID 83704  
(208) 322-4002

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14.	Include procedures to ensure health and safety of students and staff	21
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33.	Describe the manner by which eligible students from the charter school shall be allowed to participate in dual enrollment in non-charter schools within the District as provided for in Chapter 2, Title 33, Idaho Code	50
34.	Describe the compact and contiguous attendance area of the charter school	51
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**1. Elector petition forms with no less than 30 signatures.**

Elector petition forms with no less than 30 certified signatures are included in Exhibit A.

## **2. Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws of the nonprofit corporation.**

The INSPIRE Articles of Incorporation and initial approved Bylaws are included in Exhibit B.

### **3. Describe the school's educational program and how learning will occur.**

#### **a. Overview**

INSPIRE is a proposed virtual charter school that is seeking authorization from the Idaho Charter School Commission to serve students in grades K-12 throughout Idaho beginning in Fall 2005. INSPIRE will maximize academic achievement for students who need an alternative to the traditional classroom. First-year enrollment at INSPIRE is expected to be approximately 500 students, with enrollment growing to over 2,000 students by Year 5.

INSPIRE has selected for its core program the Connections Academy virtual public school curriculum, instructional model, and technology that have proven successful nationwide, supplemented and expanded specifically for Idaho.

Working under the guidance of certified, highly qualified teachers with whom they interact via telephone, email, and groupware following a Personalized Learning Plan, INSPIRE students will engage in a rigorous, Idaho Achievement Standards-aligned curriculum that is rich in print, enhanced by technology, and tailored to their learning needs. INSPIRE may also provide an alternative program for approved grade levels.

Each INSPIRE student has a learning coach, typically a parent, who works daily with the student face-to-face following detailed INSPIRE lesson plans under the guidance of the professional INSPIRE teacher.

INSPIRE students will be provided with the complete curriculum materials (online and offline, print- and technology-based) for their grade, a loaned family computer and subsidized Internet access. All INSPIRE students have the opportunity to participate in face-to-face field trips and community activities while also learning to work effectively in a virtual environment not unlike the working world that they will one day enter.

The INSPIRE school will also serve as a reference site for Idaho scholars engaged in research on technology, education, and distance learning. The INSPIRE founding group is engaged in ongoing discussions with Boise State University (see Provost letter, enclosed) regarding a multi-faceted partnership which may include location of the INSPIRE office and teaching center on the university campus, collaboration on teacher training and curriculum development, and research and evaluation activities.

#### **b. Curriculum**

INSPIRE combines proven and rigorous print-based curriculum materials with the best in technology-enhanced learning such that a significant portion of the curriculum is delivered through the Internet and other electronic means. The entire curriculum is aligned to the Idaho Achievement Standards.

The INSPIRE curriculum will be based on the Connections Academy program as extended for grades K-12 in Idaho. INSPIRE may also provide an alternative program for approved grade levels.

- The K-8 Connections Academy curriculum integrates textbooks, lesson plans and other content from a variety of leading publishers and school programs including Houghton Mifflin, Zaner-Bloser, the Calvert school and others (see course catalog included as Exhibit C1). The curriculum is regularly updated to conform to state

standards and student needs. The Connections Academy curriculum has been shown to be effective based on standardized test scores in other states and is currently in the process of being accredited by the Commission on International and Trans-regional Accreditation (CITA).

- The Connections Academy 9-12 program will provide a more online high school curriculum, as appropriate for secondary school learners (see Exhibit C2 for an overview of the 9th grade curriculum). The high school curriculum, which will be fully aligned with Idaho Achievement Standards, will integrate digital versions of textbooks from major publishers enhanced by multimedia, interactive material, communication/ conferencing tools, and team projects. Top-quality third-party courseware elements will be licensed as part of the 9-12 curriculum, based on alignment to Idaho Achievement Standards, demonstrated success in producing positive test results, accreditation by CITA and/or a regional accrediting organization, and fit with the Connections Academy and INSPIRE curriculum philosophies. For example, INSPIRE may seek to include courses licensed from the Idaho Digital Learning Academy as part of this complete high school curriculum.

The entire K-12 INSPIRE curriculum will be updated on a regular basis, with major changes subject to approval by the school's Governing Board.

Technology plays an important facilitating role in the INSPIRE curriculum, so INSPIRE will ensure that its students have access to technology. Each family participating in INSPIRE will receive a loaned computer with a printer and an Internet service subsidy. All necessary software and technology support are provided along with the computers. For a discussion of safe and appropriate use of technology tools, see Element 37.

In addition to working with the curriculum materials described above, INSPIRE students will have the opportunity to participate regularly in both face-to-face and virtual community activities. Face-to-face activities include field trips and community outings facilitated by the INSPIRE community coordinators -parent volunteers whom INSPIRE supports in organizing such activities for families who live nearby. INSPIRE's technology•

based activities include virtual group projects, online bulletin boards/forums (such as "Math Problem of the Week"), book chats, teacher-led discussions, learning-focused webmail, and student clubs ranging from chess to yearbook. All of the collaborative online activities and communications tools are restricted for use only by members of the INSPIRE community; parents can feel comfortable that their children are experiencing this technology safely within the "walled garden" of INSPIRE.

Given the balance of modes and media for learning at INSPIRE, actual time online for students (as compared to parents and teachers) will vary according to each student's developmental level, learning needs, and learning styles. Students in grades K and 1 may spend up to 15% of their time online; students in grades 2 -5 may have a range of 15 - 25%; students in grades 6 - 8 may range from 25-50+% of time online, and students in grades 9- 12 may spend up to 75% of their school time online.

INSPIRE will be part of a family of schools using the Connections Academy program and will be a trailblazer among them for its inclusion of grades 9-12. There are currently 11

Connections Academy schools in eight states across the country: Wisconsin, Colorado, California, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Florida, Arizona and Minnesota. Student achievement results from the 2003-04 school year confirm the effectiveness of the Connections Academy curriculum. The Connections Academy program has been used in Colorado and Wisconsin for more than one year and test scores exceeded AYP in both states. Further in Wisconsin and Florida, Connections Academy students met or exceeded the states' standards. Other state scores represent early Fall results for the schools' first years or have not yet been reported

### c. Instructional Techniques

INSPIRE's instructional design is known as Personalized Performance Learning. Education research connects this design's three primary components -parent/family involvement, individualized instruction, and high-quality teaching -to improved student achievement:

- *Parent involvement:* Decades of research show that parent participation in education is very closely related to student achievement. In *A New Generation of Evidence: The Family Is Critical to Student Achievement*<sup>1</sup> Anne T. Henderson and Nancy Berla document concrete benefits of parent involvement for students, including higher grades and test scores, higher graduation rates, and greater enrollment in postsecondary education. A Stanford study found that using parents as tutors brought significant and immediate changes in children's I.Q. scores. At INSPIRE, all parents are closely involved in their child's education either directly as a learning coach or through oversight of a learning coach they designate.
- *Individualized instruction:* Students clearly benefit from instruction that is individualized in terms of pace, content, sequence and style. Among the many studies on this topic, Margaret Haertel and her colleagues show in "What Helps Students Learn?"<sup>2</sup> that "curriculum and assessment tailored to student ability and academic background" to assure "an appropriate level of task difficulty for students and an appropriate instructional pace" is a proven tool for helping students achieve. At INSPIRE, instruction is individualized for every student, every day.
- *High-quality teaching:* Each teacher will be equipped with the skills and technology needed to bring out the best in every student. In his landmark study correlating test data with teacher quality, Harold Wenglinsky of the Educational Testing Service showed a direct link between good teaching and higher test scores. Students benefit from the personalized guidance of INSPIRE's highly qualified teachers.

**The Personalized Learning Plan:** The centerpiece of instruction at INSPIRE is the Personalized Learning Plan (PLP), which provides for individualized instruction tailored to the learning needs of each child. The PLP is an extensive document developed at the beginning of the school year by the Idaho-certified teacher in consultation with the student and the student's parents/guardians. This PLP is built from a combination of baseline

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Henderson, A., & Berla, N. , eds. (1994). *A new generation of evidence: The family is critical to student achievement*. National Committee for Citizens in Education, Center for Law and Education, Washington, DC.

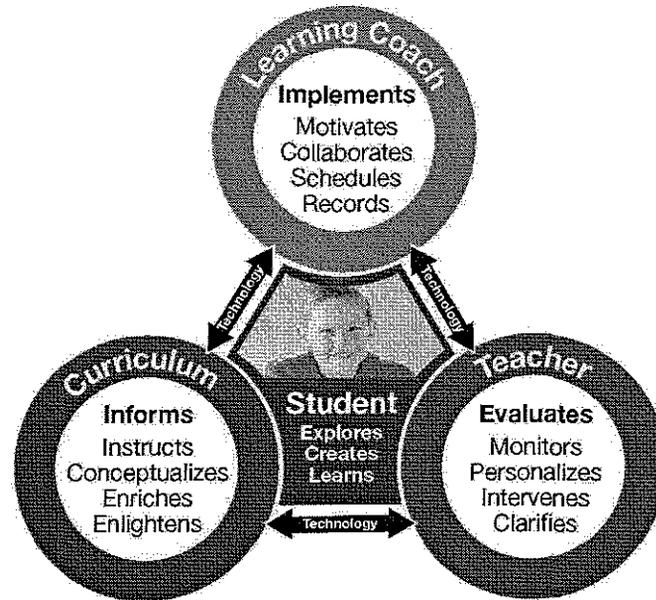
<sup>2</sup> Wang, Margaret C., Haertel, Geneva D., and Walberg, Herbert J. (1993), "What Helps Students Learn?" *Educational Leadership*.

<sup>3</sup> Wenglinsky, Harold (2000), *How Teaching Matters: Bringing the Classroom Back Into Discussions of Teacher Quality*, Educational Testing Service.

assessments of both academic skills/knowledge and learning modalities, information gathered from the parents, and input directly from the student. Learning needs that go beyond the purely academic (such as study habits and interpersonal skills) are addressed in the PLP as well. The PLP then guides the student's course through the Idaho Achievement Standards-based curriculum.

All daily lesson plans are provided to students and families online, directing them step by step through use of the comprehensive set of textbooks, trade books, manipulatives, and consumables that INSPIRE ships to them.

The Learning Triad: Instruction at INSPIRE builds on the research and the PLP to surround each student with the resources needed for success. Each student will be part of a "learning triad" as illustrated below.



**Learning Management System:** The platform for organizing and managing the entire INSPIRE educational environment is the online Learning Management System (LMS). This proprietary, web-based software allows INSPIRE to deliver every assignment and track every activity, monitoring the completion of individual lessons as well as mastery of discrete skills and knowledge (see Exhibit D, Learning Management System highlights). With this system, INSPIRE is able to provide an unprecedented level of time-on-task detail. The LMS operates within Connections Academy's very secure and robust technology infrastructure which protects all data from loss and intrusion while maintaining a safe environment in which students, parents, and teachers can interact with each other (see Exhibit E, Network Infrastructure & Security).

**A complete learning team:** At INSPIRE, student learning benefits from committed educators and involved parents who provide total support for the student's PLP.

- *Idaho-certified, highly qualified teachers:* Each INSPIRE student will have an Idaho-certified teacher specially trained in the INSPIRE curriculum and instructional

method. Working full-time in INSPIRE's local professional office/teaching center, which is proposed to be located on the Boise State University campus, this teacher is responsible for evaluating assignments and work products, providing instructional assistance, assigning and scoring assessment activities, and providing feedback on the child's performance. Based on a student's demonstrated mastery of the material, teachers will add, expand or replace assignments; they will also grade students in each subject for the regular student report cards and make promotion or retention decisions. Depending on the need of the learner, teacher contact with the student and learning coach -most often via telephone and email -may be as frequent as several times a day, and at minimum once every two weeks. Teachers do not wait to be contacted; they are proactive participants in their student's learning plans. In addition, INSPIRE families are always welcome to visit the INSPIRE office in Boise during business hours to meet with their teachers in person.

- *Face-to-face learning coaches:* Each INSPIRE student will have a learning coach• a parent or other responsible adult designated by the parents-who works with him or her in person under the guidance of the Idaho-certified professional teacher. Parent involvement is a centerpiece of the INSPIRE concept. Whether a parent's role is as a learning coach, or as someone providing oversight to the learning coach, all parents/guardians will be intimately familiar with their child's progress on a day-to-day basis at INSPIRE. The school offers ongoing training and support to help learning coaches carry out their important role while making optimum use of the available technology tools and professional teacher support to do so.
- *Expanded educational support:* The INSPIRE principal coordinates the work of the teachers, using data from the Learning Management System to target curriculum and instructional resources toward specific student needs. Supporting the principal and teachers in their work are Connections Academy curriculum specialists, who are highly trained in distance education methodologies and specific subject areas. Curriculum specialists will be available by telephone and email to the INSPIRE teachers for assistance in addressing particular curriculum topics or in customizing curriculum for particular student needs. The Connections Academy Special Education Director serves as resource for teachers as they develop/adjust services for special education students in the INSPIRE program. INSPIRE may also provide an alternative program for approved grade levels.

In effect, each INSPIRE student has a team of experts working together to leverage the school's myriad resources -technological, instructional, and interpersonal - for his or her success.

#### **4. Identify the school's goals and how all Educational Thoroughness Standards (as defined in Section 33-1612, Idaho Code) shall be fulfilled.**

INSPIRE's overarching goal is student mastery of its challenging, Idaho Achievement Standards-aligned curriculum in a personalized learning environment that promotes 21st century learning skills and meets Idaho's Educational Thoroughness Standards, as required by the Idaho Public Charter School law. INSPIRE will achieve this overarching goal through seven measurable objectives described in detail in Elements 5 and 6.

INSPIRE believes that an educated person of the 21st century must be literate and articulate, mathematically competent, scientifically and technologically adept and have the opportunity to develop individual creative and physical abilities. INSPIRE recognizes its responsibility to generate enthusiasm and excitement for the lifelong process of learning by providing a curriculum that is relevant, integrated and age-appropriate at the same time that it is aligned to Idaho Achievement Standards. INSPIRE is a high-quality, high-tech, high-touch virtual "school without walls" that brings out the best in every student through Personalized Performance Learning.

The INSPIRE goals and objectives will be met through curriculum and instructional programs that fulfill all of the recommendations recently put forth by the Partnership for 21st Century Skills<sup>4</sup> which include:

- Emphasis on core subjects: INSPIRE students will master the timeless fundamentals such as reading, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies.
- Emphasis on learning skills: INSPIRE students develop the essential skills required for lifelong, continuous learning, such as communication, information, problem-solving, and self-directional skills.
- The use of 21st century tools to develop learning skills: As the Partnership recommends, INSPIRE students develop proficiency in an array of digital information and communication tools.
- Teaching and learning in a 21st century context: At INSPIRE, learning takes place beyond the "four walls of the classroom" and integrates the community, parents, and fellow learners connected by technology, as the Partnership recommends.
- Teaching and learning of 21st century content: The Partnership stresses global awareness, economic literacy, and civic literacy among other topics, which the INSPIRE curriculum integrates throughout the grades through both technology-based and print-based learning activities.
- Use of 21st century assessments that measure 21st century skills: As the Partnership recommends, INSPIRE uses both standardized testing and ongoing, curriculum-based assessments -including portfolios of student work and online assessment activities -which integrate with teacher data analysis tools to allow for sophisticated instructional decision-making by parents, students, and school staff.

INSPIRE also believes that the individualized and supported educational program

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<sup>4</sup>The Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills, "Learning for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century," June 2003, <http://www.21stcenturyskills.org>.

facilitates the development of self-direction and personal responsibility among its students. In these ways, INSPIRE will meet the objective of producing students who are self-motivated, competent, lifelong 21st century learners.

INSPIRE's innovative curriculum and technology also support the eight Educational Thoroughness Standards established in Section 33-1612 of the Idaho Code:

- A safe environment conducive to learning is provided: INSPIRE students attend school primarily from home, a learning environment chosen by many families specifically because it is safe and conducive to focused instruction. In addition, the INSPIRE online environment is carefully structured and monitored by the school to be safe and conducive to learning.
- Educators are empowered to maintain classroom discipline: At INSPIRE, parents, students, and teachers together share responsibility for maintaining a disciplined learning environment. The classroom at home is overseen by the parents, who are empowered to maintain discipline as they see fit with their own children; parents also have access to the advice and support of other INSPIRE families on how to run an organized and disciplined classroom at home. The "virtual classroom" where students come together as a school community is governed by clear and consistent rules of behavior articulated in the INSPIRE code of conduct and handbook.
- The basic values of honesty, self-discipline, unselfishness, respect for authority and the central importance of work are emphasized: The core INSPIRE curriculum emphasizes universal values and moral development in a non-sectarian way, through classic literature, high-quality social studies materials, a home life course, and multiple opportunities for positive interactions among students, families, and the community. Because success in a virtual school requires a high degree of self-discipline and hard work, the entire school experience reinforces these values.
- The skills necessary to communicate effectively are taught: The INSPIRE curriculum includes a very rigorous and expansive focus on written communication, including everything from diagramming sentences to developing major expressive works. Excellent communication skills are considered absolutely essential for teachers who wish to work at INSPIRE, as well as for students aiming for success in an environment in which telephone conversations, email, and message board postings are the primary forms of interaction with peers and teachers.
- A basic curriculum necessary to enable students to enter academic or professional-technical postsecondary educational programs is provided: The INSPIRE curriculum is very strong on all the fundamentals required for higher education at all levels. The classical nature of the curriculum and its alignment with the Idaho Achievement Standards further ensures that INSPIRE students will be well-prepared for post-high school education both outside and inside of Idaho. INSPIRE may also provide an alternative program for approved grade levels.
- The skills necessary for students to enter the workforce are taught: In addition to a solid grounding in literacy and numeracy and development of higher order thinking skills, INSPIRE students will benefit from the kinds of skills needed for

today's working world -virtual team work, distance communications, information management, and use of technology.

- The students are introduced to current technology: INSPIRE students interact daily with current computer technology, which the school provides for their homes. In addition, INSPIRE offers a multi-layered technology skills elective that explicitly covers all the basics of technology literacy as defined by the National Education Technology Standards.
- The importance of students acquiring the skills to enable them to be responsible citizens of their homes, schools and communities is emphasized: Good citizenship is a watchword of the INSPIRE school experience, as students learn to interact constructively with online peers from all walks of life while developing invaluable skills in their interrelationships with siblings, parents, and community members. In a very real sense, INSPIRE prepares its students to be good citizens of the 21st century world.

**5. Identify measurable student educational standards/objectives which describe the extent to which all students of the charter school demonstrate they have attained the skills and knowledge specified as goals.**

Within the framework of alignment to the Idaho Achievement Standards, a crucial component of INSPIRE' s plan for overall excellence is the establishment of clear academic and related goals for each student, and for the school, as well as clear ways to measure progress toward those goals. Specifically:

*Objective 1 -Ongoing Student Progress:* INSPIRE students will demonstrate ongoing progress in their Idaho Achievement Standards-aligned curriculum as measured by satisfactory attendance, participation, and performance. INSPIRE will set these benchmarks as follows:

- 90% of students will be in Satisfactory status on attendance each quarter during the school year, as logged by learning coaches/students and verified by teachers;
- 80% of students will in Satisfactory status on participation each quarter during the school year as measured by completion of lessons/courses, submission of portfolio items in timely manner, communication with the teacher, and several other variables; and
- 75% of students will be in Satisfactory status on performance each quarter during the school year as measured through demonstration of learned concepts on academic tasks across all core academic subjects based on internal assessments (including quizzes, tests and portfolios).

*Objective 2 -Standardized Test Performance:* INSPIRE students will participate in the Idaho Reading Indicator (IRI) in grades K-3, Idaho Direct Mathematics Assessment (DMA), the Idaho Direct Writing Assessment (DWA), and the Idaho Standards Achievement Test (ISAT) in other grades. The goal of all INSPIRE stakeholders will be to have schoolwide composite IRI, DMA/DWA, and ISAT scores that are equal to or better than the statewide benchmark of students meeting or exceeding standards by Year 3.

*Objective 3 - Student Academic Growth:* In the value-added model of academic growth upon which INSPIRE is based, each student will demonstrate a year of academic growth for a year in school. Using its standards-based, technology-facilitated Longitudinal Evaluation of Academic Progress (LEAP) pre- and post-test, INSPIRE will gauge each student's academic growth over the course of the year. The goal of all INSPIRE stakeholders will be that that at least 75% of students will demonstrate a year of academic growth on an annual basis.

*Objective 4 -Parent Satisfaction:* As a school of choice, INSPIRE must ensure that parents and families maintain a level of satisfaction with their child's school experience. The goal of all INSPIRE stakeholders will be that the school attains an overall score of at

least **4** (on a scale of 1-5) each year on the annual Connections Academy parent satisfaction survey.

***Objective 5 -- Teacher Quality:*** INSPIRE will provide its students with excellent teaching by teachers dedicated to a specified grade range working together in an office/teaching center. The goal of all INSPIRE stakeholders will be that 100% of teachers will be highly qualified and that annual teacher attrition will be less than 6%.

***Objective 6 - Longitudinal Student Gains:*** By its fifth year of operation, INSPIRE expects to have served a subset of its students for multiple years. Our goal at the end of Year 5 will be that students who have attended INSPIRE for three or more years will score a minimum of 10% higher on ISAT than their grade-level peers who are in their first year at INSPIRE.

***Objective 7- Contribution to Knowledge Base:*** INSPIRE intends to serve as a living laboratory for research by Idaho scholars on individualized instruction and distance learning. Our goal by the end of Year 5 is to have contributed to the greater knowledge base on these issues, as measured by the completion of one or more credible research studies using data from INSPIRE.

**6. Identify various methods by which student progress is to be measured in meeting educational standards/objectives.**

INSPIRE provides a variety of assessments throughout the year so that each student's academic progress is monitored on multiple levels, beginning with a placement test which facilitates appropriate matching of standards-aligned curriculum with student learning needs. Throughout the year, the INSPIRE Learning Management System maintains extensive specific data about every activity by every student every day. Furthermore, the robust student information system capabilities of the LMS permit rapid in-depth evaluation of performance by sub-groups such as disabled students or gifted/talented students. This rich array of data allows very targeted evaluation of the school's progress toward its objectives, as detailed below.

<b>Objective</b>	<b>How Progress Will Be Measured</b>
<b>Objective 1 - Ongoing Student Progress,</b> including Satisfactory status each quarter by 90% of students on attendance, 80% of students in on participation, and 75% of students in performance	Learning Management System data verified/evaluated by teachers; ongoing assessments (online and offline quizzes, tests, work samples/portfolios)
<b>Objective 2 -Standardized Test Performance:</b> Schoolwide composite IRI/SMA/DWA/ISAT scores equal to or better than the statewide benchmark by Year 3	Idaho Reading Indicator, Idaho Direct Mathematics Assessment, Idaho Direct Writing Assessment, Idaho Standards Achievement Test scores
<b>Objective 3 - Student Academic Growth:</b> 75% of its students across will demonstrate a year of academic growth on an annual basis.	Longitudinal Evaluation of Academic Progress (LEAP) pre- and post-test
<b>Objective 4 -Parent Satisfaction:</b> Overall Parent Satisfaction score of at least 4 out of 5 each year	Annual Parent Satisfaction Survey
<b>Objective 5-- Teacher Quality:</b> 100% highly qualified, annual attrition of less than 6%	Audit of human resources records
<b>Objective 6- Longitudinal Student Gains:</b> Students who have attended INSPIRE for three or more years score a minimum of 10% higher on ISAT than their grade-level peers who are in their first year at INSPIRE.	Idaho Standards Achievement Test scores
<b>Objective 7- Contribution to Knowledge Base:</b> Facilitate contribution by Idaho scholars to the greater knowledge base on individualized instruction and distance learning for at-risk students	One or more research studies within first five years

**7. Include a provision by which students will be tested with the same standardized tests as other Idaho public school students.**

Like all Idaho public school students, INSPIRE students will participate in required standardized testing, including the Idaho Reading Indicator for kindergarten and grades 1-3, the Idaho Standards Achievement Test, the Direct Math and Direct Writing Assessment, and the National Assessment of Educational Progress, or whatever successor tests the State Board of Education should approve.

Although they are students in a virtual school, INSPIRE students will take these standardized tests in person, at proctored locations within reasonable driving distance of their homes. Arranging these locations and ensuring that students are prepared and participate will be an important responsibility of the principal and the teaching staff.

If students and their families lack transportation to the testing sites and no informal arrangements can be made (e.g., carpooling with fellow INSPIRE students), the school will arrange for transportation. Funds for such transportation are included in the budget under Student Testing/Assessment (along with funds for testing site rental).

**8. Include a provision that ensures the charter school shall be accredited as provided by rule of the Idaho State Board of Education.**

As soon as school operations begin, INSPIRE will launch the process of seeking accreditation as provided by Idaho State Board of Education rule. This early pursuit of accreditation is a hallmark of the Connections Academy family of schools, building upon CITA accreditation to seek regional accreditation.

From day one, INSPIRE will ensure that its school operations meet the Idaho accreditation standards:

- **Vision, Mission and Policies:** Both the INSPIRE vision of personalized, 21st century learning and its mission of facilitating optimum achievement for each student are supported by clear, consistent, and well-articulated policies governing the life of the school.
- **Highly Qualified Personnel:** INSPIRE teachers are Idaho-certified and qualified to teach in their subject areas and grade levels.
- **Educational Program:** The INSPIRE educational program is research-based and integrates the highest quality curriculum materials aligned to Idaho Achievement Standards.
- **Learning Environment:** The INSPIRE learning environment combines the personalization and safety of the student's home with the expansive, barrier-free world of technology, all structured to meet the learning needs of the student.
- **Continuous School Improvement:** The INSPIRE Learning Management System provides complete data on student performance to empower teachers to continuously improve their practice while equipping the principal and Governing Board to press for ongoing improvements in overall school operations.
- **Student Achievement:** INSPIRE's ultimate goal is to improve student achievement through personalized, data-driven instruction; highest-quality curriculum; and meaningful parent, family, and community involvement in each learner's progress.

**9. Describe the governance structure of the school, including the person or entity that shall be legally accountable for the operation of the school.**

The INSPIRE Governing Board will oversee the operation of the charter school and be legally accountable for its operations. The Board sets policy and hires contractors, including those providing the management, curriculum, technology and instructional services.

Additionally, the Board is responsible for ensuring that all aspects of the financial and programmatic accountability systems fulfill INSPIRE's obligations to the Idaho Department of Education. The Board shall adopt all policies as required for the charter school program of INSPIRE.

**Board Meetings:** The Board will meet monthly on a uniform day of a uniform week, and its meeting in July in each year will be considered its annual meeting and annual budget hearing. Special meetings of the Board may be called by the chairman or by any two (2) members of the board and held at any time with appropriate notice as set forth in the organization's bylaws and in Section 33-510 Idaho Code. All meetings will take place in accordance with requirements of Idaho Code and charter school rules, including but not limited to the laws regarding interested parties and conflict of interest.

**Board composition:** The founding members of the Governing Board were selected in keeping with the bylaws and were seated by the incorporator. They shall, in selecting future Board members, ensure potential members are committed to the school's mission. In addition, the Board will evaluate the potential members' credibility and integrity within the community. INSPIRE will actively recruit Board members who have professional skills that complement or add to the existing Board composition. The Board will also consider members' professional, educational, and practical experience. At least one position is to be held by someone with expertise in education. In order to insure parental involvement in the governance of the school, at least one position will be the parent or guardian of a student enrolled in the charter school (or prospective student prior to the start of school operations). As provided in the bylaws, the initial Board members will vote on the above positions for new board members, with a majority required for acceptance.

**Board training:** In order to insure smooth operations and effective board practices, INSPIRE will develop Governing Board training procedures. These will include orientation, training and self-evaluation strategies. The INSPIRE Governing Board will be responsible for outlining and implementing a regular, ongoing program in these areas.

**Operating structure:** The operating structure of the school will be similar to a traditional educational environment with a school principal who will supervise administrative staff and teachers. The school principal will act according to the policies and procedures as approved by the Governing Board. The principal will also act in an information and advisory capacity to the board, and will be responsible for implementing board policies in the day to day operation of the school. All personnel decisions including hiring, firing and evaluations concerning the principal and the teachers will be the responsibility of the Governing Board.

## **10. Describe the process to be followed to ensure parental involvement.**

Parent involvement is a centerpiece of the INSPIRE concept. Whether a parent's role is as a learning coach working daily with one or more students, or as someone providing insights and guidance to a learning coach, all parents/guardians will be intimately familiar with their child's progress on a day-to-day basis at INSPIRE. The Learning Management System ensures that all parents have access to complete data about their children's learning, and the human infrastructure of the school -the principal and teachers -place the highest premium on supporting the role of parents. The school offers ongoing training and support to help learning coaches carry out their important role while making optimum use of the available technology tools and professional teacher support to do so.

The opportunity for meaningful, intensive involvement in their children's education is part of what draws families schools like INSPIRE in the Connections Academy family, and research among participating families indicates a high level of satisfaction in this regard. On the most recent Parent Satisfaction Survey, more than 90% of parents graded the Connections Academy A or B (see Exhibit F).

In addition to involvement focused on their own children's learning needs, INSPIRE parents will have multiple opportunities to shape the overall school experience. They can volunteer to serve as Community Coordinators, arranging field trips and other face-to-face activities among INSPIRE families who live nearby. They may be selected to serve as a parent member of the Governing Board, or serve on ad hoc groups convened by the Governing Board to focus on particular issues such as community partnerships and neighborhood outreach. Parents may also choose to join the Connections Academy Families Association, a national group of Connections Academy parents that has become very active in ensuring that parents' voices are heard throughout the Connections Academy network of schools.

## **11. Outline the qualifications to be met by individuals employed by the school.**

INSPIRE's instructional leader will be the principal. Qualifications for the position are as follows:

- The INSPIRE principal will possess an advanced degree and an appropriate administrative credential as required by Idaho Board rules.
- A minimum of three years of management or administrative experience is required.
- A former principal or master teacher is ideal.
- The prospective principal must be technology literate and have good communication skills.
- Must be able to build consensus and inspire teachers to teach, students to learn and parents to engage in their child's learning while following the mission of the school.

The INSPIRE principal shall be offered a performance contract that includes provisions regarding the due process protections to be afforded to principals and the procedures for termination, which shall meet the minimum standards as specified by the Board.

The performance contract shall also include any performance criteria or goals negotiated between the INSPIRE governing body and the principal.

The performance contract will augment the standard contract approved by the State Board of Education.

**Teachers:** INSPIRE will have one teacher for every 50 students, with whom they will work one-on-one via telephone, email, group chat, and other means. Teachers will be required to possess:

- An appropriate Idaho teaching credential.
- A Bachelor's degree.
- A minimum of three years teaching experience.
- Certification that they are highly qualified for the assigned grades/subject matter.
- Skills in teaching a standards-based curriculum and incorporating innovative approaches to instruction.
- Good communication skills.
- Technology literacy.

Special attention will be paid to applicants who have experience in individualized instruction, virtual teams and distance education. Teachers with certification in reading and mathematics, as well as those qualified to teach ESL, will also be given special attention.

At least one teacher will have certification in Special Education in accordance with all Idaho requirements.

**12. Include provision that ensures all staff members will submit a criminal history check fingerprint card to the Office of Certification at the State Department of Education.**

The INSPIRE Governing Board and principal will ensure that all INSPIRE staff members, including the principal, will submit a criminal history check fingerprint card to the Office of Certification at the Idaho State Department of Education, as required by Idaho Code §§ 33-130 and 33-5210(4)(d).

**13. A statement that all teachers and administrators will be on a written contract approved by the Superintendent of Public Instruction.**

All INSPIRE teachers and administrators including the principal, will be employed by the charter school under written contract with the school in form as approved by the Governing Board and the Superintendent of Public Instruction, conditioned upon a valid certificate being held by such professional personnel at the time of assuming their duties. All certificated employees will be employed by the Governing Board as required by Idaho Code § 33-5206(4) and all personnel actions concerning teachers and administrators including the principal, will be the responsibility of the Governing Board.

#### **14. Include procedures to ensure health and safety of students and staff.**

Immunization/Medical Records Information: All enrolling INSPIRE students and staff will provide records documenting immunizations to the extent required by law. In addition, each enrolling family will provide the school with contact information for its primary care physician as well as information about its health insurance coverage for use in handling student health emergencies.

Facility safety: The INSPIRE teaching center will be housed in a facility that has received state fire marshal approval. The facility will comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act access requirements, and with other applicable health and building code requirements. The school will maintain all appropriate facility compliance documents on file, and will make these documents available upon request.

Other health and safety policies: Prior to commencing instruction, INSPIRE will adopt and implement a comprehensive set of health, safety, and risk management policies. These policies will be developed in consultation with the school's insurance carriers and following review of state policies. They will, at a minimum, address and/or include the following topics:

- Policies and procedures for response to natural disasters and emergencies.
- Policies relating to preventing contact with blood-borne pathogens and providing training to employees on such prevention.
- A policy requiring that instructional and administrative staff receive training in emergency response, including appropriate "first responder" training or its equivalent and/or hold current certificates in emergency response.
- Policies relating to the administration of prescription drugs and other medicines.
- A policy establishing that the school functions as a drug, alcohol, and tobacco free workplace.
- A policy regarding health screenings for student, such as vision, hearing, etc.
- Policies regarding visitors to the school facility, and other school security issues.
- Policies to insure the school is in compliance with federal sexual harassment prevention guidelines and is maintaining a learning and work environment that is free from sexual harassment.

All of the school's Health and Safety policies will be incorporated as appropriate into the school's student and staff handbooks and will be reviewed on an ongoing basis in the school's staff development efforts and Governing Board policies.

All Health and Safety policies approved by the Governing Board will be submitted to the Idaho Public Charter School Commission upon approval by the Governing Board.

**15. Describe admission procedures, including provision for over-enrollment, which specify equitable selection processes for the initial year, as well as subsequent years of operation. In addition, include enrollment capacity of the charter school.**

As a virtual charter school, INSPIRE's enrollment capacity is quite flexible, technically limited only by parent demand and by the availability of highly qualified teachers. However, because INSPIRE will place a high priority on quality of service to its students, it has established enrollment goals for each year. In any given year, if applications for admission by the enrollment deadline exceed that year's projected enrollment goal by more than 50%, the Governing Board may vote to put into place the fair and equitable selection process, including admissions preferences, described below.

Enrollment goals for each of the first five years of school operation are:

INSPIRE admission procedures are proposed as follows, in keeping with IDAPA 08.02.04, Section 203.

**Enrollment Opportunities:** INSPIRE will provide enrollment opportunities to students throughout Idaho following the procedures outlined in Element 17, below, which conform with the requirements of IDAPA 08.02.04, Section 203.02.

**Enrollment Deadline:** Each year, an enrollment deadline will be established, and all outreach activities will begin at least three months prior to that deadline.

**Requests for Admission:** To apply for enrollment for their children, parents must complete a simple application form that conforms to the requirements of IDAPA 08.02.04, Section 203.4. Applicants are encouraged, but not required, to attend informational sessions prior to enrolling in INSPIRE. INSPIRE will conduct multiple Information Sessions for families in Spring and Summer 2005, following approval of the charter. These sessions will be held in different parts of Idaho to assure that families from a variety of communities are able to attend. INSPIRE will use these sessions to provide a complete array of information about its program, including its curriculum, teaching methods, technology resources and testing requirements.

Many families may visit the website ([www.connectionsacademy.com](http://www.connectionsacademy.com)) or call the toll-free information line (800-382-6010) to learn about INSPIRE. The website contains information about the proposed charter school, its Personalized Performance Learning approach, and its curriculum. The site also contains a regularly updated set of Frequently Asked Questions

and their answers. When the charter has been approved, the site will be expanded to include application information and procedures, the INSPIRE School Handbook, and other useful tools for prospective students and their families.

Through its recruitment/marketing and application guidance activities, INSPIRE will disclose full details about its program and encourage families to carefully consider its academic and parental involvement demands before applying. INSPIRE will also provide tools (such as an online self-quiz and contact with a Connections Academy education counselor if desired) to help parents decide whether INSPIRE is truly the right fit for their children and themselves.

To finalize their enrollment, parents complete all enrollment and placement activities in a timely and complete fashion. This includes signing all necessary school-family agreements (such as the sample Parent/Learning Coach Agreement, Exhibit G). INSPIRE families will have the opportunity to receive extensive training prior to the start of the school year. This is particularly important for families whose children have only been in a public school setting or for those who have had limited exposure to technology. The training includes a thorough orientation to the Learning Management System and practice lessons for the students. Families also receive a book on virtual schooling that provides guidelines on everything from setting up a classroom in the home to how to handle more than one student.

**Admission Preferences:** INSPIRE will not discriminate against pupils on the basis of sex, race, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital status, sexual orientation, or physical, mental, emotional, or learning disability or handicap in its education programs or activities, including its admissions policies and procedures. INSPIRE will establish admission preferences and priority of preferences for initial and subsequent years as permitted in IDAPA 08.02.04, Sections 203.05-07, as follows:

- **Priority of Preferences for Initial Enrollment:** In Year 1 of INSPIRE, preferences will be given first to children of founders, if any, limited to no more than 10% of initial capacity; "founders" shall be defined as the founding group members listed on the Articles of Incorporation as well as initial members of the Governing Board. Second priority will be given to siblings of students selected by through the equitable selection process described below. Third priority will be given to students selected through the equitable selection process described below. (As a virtual charter school, INSPIRE has the entire state of Idaho as an "attendance area," so no meaningful preference can be given for attendance area residence.)
- **Priority of Preferences for Subsequent Enrollment Periods:** In Years 2 and beyond, enrollment preferences at INSPIRE shall go first to returning pupils, second to children of founders, third to siblings of enrolled pupils, and fourth to students selected through the equitable selection process described below.

**Proposed Attendance List:** Each year, as recommended in IDAPA 08.02.04, Section 203.08, INSPIRE will maintain a proposed attendance list containing the names of all prospective students on whose behalf a request for admission was timely received by the school. The list of names will be separated by grade level, with columns designating the admissions preference status of each student (e.g., "A" for returning student preference, "B" for founder's preference, "C" for sibling preference).

**Equitable Selection Process:** In any given year, should the number of applications to INSPIRE exceed the school's enrollment goals by more than 50%, the Governing Board may vote to implement a lottery to ensure an equitable and impartial selection process. The lottery will follow the model process set forth in IDAPA 08.02.04, Section 203.09. The Governing Board will select an independent organization -a "third, neutral party" as recommended in the model process -to conduct and oversee the lottery at a separate and accessible location at least 30 days prior to the start of school. Families of applicants will be invited but not required to attend. During the lottery, the model selection process will continue until the entire applicant pool has been exhausted. First, the open position candidates will be assigned, following the preferences outlined above, and then a waiting list will be generated.

Results of the lottery will be certified as "true and correct" by the organization conducting the lottery within 24 hours of the event, and posted prominently on the INSPIRE website. Persons contesting the lottery results, on whatever grounds, will have 48 hours to present a letter specifically detailing their concerns. The INSPIRE Governing Board will consider all written protests and will make a determination as to whether to repeat the lottery or proceed with the original results.

Applicants on the "accepted" list will be notified by mail within five (5) business days following the final certification of lottery results, and parents will have ten (10) days in which to sign a commitment letter to indicate the pupil will attend the school. If the signed commitment letter is not returned within the allotted period of time, enrollment at INSPIRE will be offered to the next student on the waiting list, whose parents will have five (5) business days in which to respond with a signed commitment letter. As vacancies arise during the school year, enrollment opportunities will continue to be offered to those on the waiting list in a similar fashion.

The processes by which waiting lists are developed and maintained annually are described in Element 16, below.

**16. A statement describing how waiting lists will be developed and renewed annually.**

As described in Element 15, above, the INSPIRE Governing Board may decide to conduct a lottery for admission (following the model procedures set forth in IDAPA 08.02.04, Section 203.09) in any year in which the number of prospective exceed the enrollment goal by more than 50%. Each year's lottery will generate a waiting list following the enrollment preferences outlined above.

During any given school year, vacancies created by students leaving INSPIRE shall be filled from the waiting list. Enrollees selected from the waiting list will be notified by mail and will have five (5) business days in which to respond with a signed letter of commitment.

The waiting list for a given school year shall not roll over to the next school year; a new selection list and waiting list will be generated each year in which the Governing Board determines that the number of prospective students requires implementation of the equitable lottery process.

**17. Describe the manner in which citizens residing in the compact and contiguous attendance area of the charter school will be made aware of enrollment opportunities.**

As a virtual charter school, INSPIRE has an attendance area that covers the entire state of Idaho. INSPIRE will actively recruit families that represent the full cultural, demographic and socioeconomic range of Idaho communities. To do so, INSPIRE will use a variety of means to inform families about its services and provide them an opportunity to enroll, including:

- *Direct mail:* After approval of the charter, INSPIRE will conduct one or more direct mail campaigns announcing the school to families with children throughout Idaho. In a typical mailing, INSPIRE will send out a postcard inviting parents to attend an Information Session (see below), visit the website, and/or contact the call center. INSPIRE may also use electronic mail to supplement its physical mail campaign.
- *Information sessions:* INSPIRE will conduct multiple Information Sessions for families in Spring and Summer 2005, following approval of the charter. These sessions will be held across Idaho to ensure that families from a variety of communities are able to attend. INSPIRE will use these sessions to provide a complete array of information about its program, including its curriculum, teaching methods, technology resources and testing requirements.
- *Web site:* INSPIRE will launch and maintain a website ([www.connectionsacademy.com](http://www.connectionsacademy.com)) that contains information about the proposed charter school, its Personalized Performance Learning approach, and its curriculum. The site also contains a regularly updated set of Frequently Asked Questions and their answers. When the charter has been approved, the site will be expanded to include application information and procedures, the School Handbook, and other useful tools for prospective students and their families.
- *Telephone/e-mail information service:* INSPIRE has launched and will maintain a toll• free information line (800-382-6010) and an email information service ([info@connectionsacademy.com](mailto:info@connectionsacademy.com)) to answer parents' questions about the contract school.
- *Community and youth services partnerships:* As part of its outreach process, INSPIRE will provide information about the school to community, family, and youth• serving organizations such as Boys and Girls Clubs; reach out to residential facilities; and seek partnerships with parent groups, health-related organizations; and organizations for young performers and athletes.
- *School district referrals and outreach:* INSPIRE will take every opportunity to brief school administrators and guidance personnel on INSPIRE as an alternative for students

who might benefit from individualized instruction in a non-classroom setting.

- **Media outreach:** INSPIRE will make limited use of paid media, primarily advertisements in community newspapers and radio service announcements, but will take full advantage of the local media's interest in promoting community events relevant to Idaho residents in order to inform parents about INSPIRE informational sessions and to raise awareness of the school.

In future years, current INSPIRE parents will play a leading role in serving as a source of information about the school and referring other families.

**18. Describe the manner in which the annual audit of financial and programmatic operations is to be conducted.**

INSPIRE will undergo an annual audit of both its finances and its program.

As described more fully in Element 29, INSPIRE will be seeking to contract with an education management organization that provides the Connections Academy curriculum, has significant experience in supporting virtual schools nationwide, and is in good standing with all regulatory authorities concerning its financial management services. Timely annual audits conducted by outside auditors will be a key element required by the management contract.

The INSPIRE Governing Board will designate one of its members as the board treasurer who will work closely with the management organization to review the financial statements, authorize payments and report monthly to the board. The board will also appoint an audit committee and will engage a local auditor who will review the financials on a periodic basis and will also issue a final year end audit report.

In addition, the INSPIRE Governing Board will appoint a program audit committee which will engage an independent evaluator to audit the INSPIRE program on an annual basis. INSPIRE hopes to arrange for such evaluation services from an Idaho-based institution of higher education.

The results of both the financial and program audit will be reported to all INSPIRE stakeholders, including parents, the Idaho Department of Education, the Idaho Public Charter School Commission, and the community, as part of the school's annual report.

## 19. Outline procedures for suspension, expulsion and re-enrollment of students.

INSPIRE understands that it is responsible for ensuring a safe school environment. Furthermore, it expects all students enrolled in INSPIRE to accept responsibility for their actions and behavior. Appropriate conduct is expected of all students at INSPIRE. The student's code of conduct, summarized below, will be explained in the school Handbook () and includes steps to be followed in the event of misbehavior.

**Discipline, Suspension and Expulsion Policies:** The description below is provided as an initial guideline. The INSPIRE Governing Board will adopt comprehensive discipline, suspension and expulsion policies which will be in accordance with students' rights and with Section 33-205, Idaho Code and any other applicable law, including compliance with due process hearing provisions. The discipline policies will be developed to identify the types of conduct subject to discipline, to offer an opportunity for a hearing in which the student may present evidence to defend his/her actions, and, finally, to offer the student a forum in which to appeal an adverse decision. The School Handbook and the discipline policies will be approved by the INSPIRE Governing Board and will be reviewed at least once every three (3) years, more often if necessary. The Governing Board will review the policies to be sure they are within all current legal guidelines and are consistent with the school's mission and educational program.

**Suspension:** The INSPIRE principal may temporarily suspend any pupil for disciplinary reasons or for other conduct disruptive of good order or of the instructional effectiveness of the school. Violations that may lead to suspension include, but are not limited to, the following breaches of conduct, whether committed electronically or in person:

- *Cheating on tests or daily work:* A student who knowingly participates in copying, using another student's work and representing it as his or her own (for example, students transmitting their work electronically for another student's use), or who provides other students with test answers or answer keys, or otherwise uses unauthorized materials in an assignment or assessment situation.
- *Abusive conduct:* A student who uses or engages in using abusive language or conduct in the presence of others in person or electronically.
- *Vandalism:* A student who intentionally damages or destroys school property or records (physical or electronic). In these instances the school reserves the right to contact the proper law enforcement agency.
- *Theft and robbery:* A student who takes money or other property (physical or electronic) with the intent to deprive another person or the school of that property. The threat or the use of force or violence is considered a serious breach of conduct. In these instances the school reserves the right to contact the proper law enforcement agency.
- *Sexual harassment:* A student who subjects another to any unwelcome sexual advances including verbal harassment, unwelcome or inappropriate touching, or suggestions, requests, or demands for sexual favors.

- *Harassment/bullying:* A student who singles another out with antagonistic and threatening behavior, whether online or in person.

*Due Process for Suspensions:* Prior to suspending any student, the principal shall grant an informal hearing, convened with the student, parent/guardian, school principal and other staff members as appropriate, on the reasons for the suspension and the opportunity to challenge those reasons. At this hearing, the student and parent/ guardian will be informed by the school principal of the charges. Should the student not admit to the charges, he or she will be provided an explanation of the evidence. The student will be provided with an opportunity to present his or her version of the occurrence. If the school principal determines that the occurrence justifies suspension, the student and parent/ guardian will be informed and written notice will be sent to the student and parent/guardian. Students and parents/guardians will also be notified in writing of their rights.

*Duration of Suspensions:* A temporary suspension shall not exceed five (5) school days in length; and the head of school/superintendent may extend the temporary suspension an additional ten (10) school days. Provided, that on a finding by the Governing Board that immediate return to school attendance by the temporarily suspended student would be detrimental to other pupils' health, welfare or safety, the Governing Board may extend the temporary suspension for an additional five (5) school days. Any pupil who has been suspended may be readmitted by the principal who suspended him upon such reasonable conditions as said principal may prescribe.

*Board Notification:* The INSPIRE Governing Board shall be notified of any temporary suspensions, the reasons therefore, and the response, if any, thereto.

**Expulsion:** The Governing Board may deny enrollment, or may deny attendance at INSPIRE by expulsion, to any pupil who is an habitual truant, or who is incorrigible, or whose conduct, in the judgment of the board, is such as to be continuously disruptive of school discipline, or of the instructional effectiveness of the school, or whose presence in a public school is detrimental to the health and safety of other pupils, or who has been expelled from another school district in this state or any other state. Specific violations by INSPIRE students that may lead to expulsion include:

- *Weapon or firearm:* The school shall expel from school for a period of not less than one (1) year, twelve (12) calendar months, or may deny enrollment to, a student who has been found to have carried a weapon (including a bomb or explosive) or firearms on school property or at any school sponsored event in this state or any other state, except that the Governing Board may modify the expulsion or denial of enrollment order on a case-by-case basis.
- *Controlled substances:* Possession of or sale of controlled substances or paraphernalia at the school or at any school-sponsored event.
- *Criminal behavior.*
- *Arson.*

*Due process for Expulsions:* If charges are brought against a student, which could result in an expulsion, the Governing Board will convene a formal expulsion hearing

which will include the student, parent/ guardian, school principal, and other staff members as appropriate, presided over by a hearing officer (a neutral professional with experience in school discipline issues engaged as needed by the school for this purpose). No pupil shall be expelled nor denied enrollment without the Governing Board having first given written notice to the parent or guardian of the pupil, which notice shall state the grounds for the proposed expulsion or denial of enrollment and the time and place where such parent or guardian may appear to contest the action of the Board to deny school attendance, and which notice shall also state the rights of the pupil to be represented by counsel, to produce witnesses and submit evidence on his own behalf, and to cross-examine any adult witnesses who may appear against him. Within a reasonable period of time following such notification, the Governing Board shall grant the pupil and his parents or guardian a full and fair hearing on the proposed expulsion or denial of enrollment. However, the Board shall allow a reasonable period of time between such notification and the holding of such hearing to allow the pupil and his parents or guardian to prepare their response to the charge. Any pupil who is within the age of compulsory attendance, who is expelled or denied enrollment as herein provided, shall come under the purview of the juvenile corrections act, and an authorized representative of the Governing Board shall, within five (5) days, give written notice of the pupil's expulsion to the prosecuting attorney of the county of the pupil's residence.

**Students with Disabilities:** Discipline of students with disabilities shall be in accordance with the requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. 794 (sec. 504), the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act, 20 U.S.C. 1400 et. seq. (IDEA), the American with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. 12101 et. seq. (ADA). An authorized representative of the board shall report such student and incident to the appropriate law enforcement agency if there is an alleged violation of law.

**Data Reporting on Suspensions and Expulsions:** The school will include data on suspensions and expulsions in its annual performance report to the Idaho Department of Education and the Idaho Charter School Commission.

**20. Include provision that ensures all staff members will be enrolled in and covered by Public Employee Retirement System, Federal Social Security, Unemployment Insurance/Worker's Compensation Insurance.**

INSPIRE intends to attract and retain the highest-quality staff, and its employee benefits will reflect this intention. Among other benefits, INSPIRE staff will participate in:

- a. Public Employee Retirement System (PERSI): All eligible INSPIRE staff will be enrolled in PERSI, and the school will coordinate such participation, as appropriate, with the Social Security system or other reciprocal systems in the future. INSPIRE will make appropriate arrangements with the Idaho Department of Education to insure proper reporting of required payroll deductions and related data to the appropriate agencies. The school may also explore other retirement alternatives if feasible and if so directed by the Governing Board.
- b. Federal Social Security: As noted above, INSPIRE staff will have the same participation in Federal Social Security as do other Idaho public school employees.
- c. Unemployment Insurance/Worker's Compensation Insurance: INSPIRE staff will be covered for unemployment and worker's compensation, with all appropriate payroll deductions and reporting handled by the school.

**21. Include a public school attendance alternative for students residing within the school district who choose not to attend the charter school.**

As a charter school seeking original approval by the Idaho Charter School Commission, INSPIRE will not be authorized by or otherwise connected to any individual Idaho school district. However, as a statewide virtual charter school, INSPIRE will be a school of choice for students in every district. Each of these students will also have the choice to attend his or her local public school and/or an available public brick-and-mortar charter school rather enrolling in INSPIRE.

**22. Describe the transfer rights of any employee choosing to work in a charter school, and the right of this employee to return to any non-charter school in the district.**

As a statewide virtual charter school seeking approval by the Idaho Charter School Commission, INSPIRE will not be authorized by or otherwise connected to any individual school district. Therefore, the transfer and return rights of district teachers are not within INSPIRE's purview.

**23. Include provision that ensures that the staff of the charter school shall be considered a separate unit for purposes of collective bargaining.**

The INSPIRE staff will be considered its own unit for purposes of collective bargaining, should the staff choose to pursue a collective bargaining agreement.

**24. Outline procedures to be followed by the charter school and the entity granting the charter to resolve disputes relating to provisions of the charter.**

The Idaho Public Charter School Commission and the Board of Directors of INSPIRE will resolve disputes relating to the provisions of this charter by following procedures set forth in section 33-5209, Idaho Code, and the applicable rules of the State Board of Education, including a notice of defect and submission of a corrective plan of action.

## **25. Outline provisions for how special education services will be provided.**

INSPIRE is committed to serving children with disabilities whether such children are currently or newly identified as disabled. The INSPIRE teaching staff will include at least one appropriately certified special education teacher, and together with the Connections Academy's Special Education Director and staff -who possess extensive experience in providing support and services to children with disabilities using the virtual school instructional model -INSPIRE will be able to effectively meet the needs of special learners.

As a public school INSPIRE shall, through its policies and procedures, comply with all applicable requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Act, 20 U.S.C. 1400 et. Seq. (IDEA), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. 794 (sec. 504). INSPIRE will provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to children with disabilities, including, but not limited to, identifying, evaluating, planning educational programs, conducting IEP team meetings, arranging for the provision of any necessary related services through charter school staff and contractual arrangement with local school districts or private providers, and implementing placements in accordance with those Acts. To ensure that INSPIRE's special education services are in keeping with Idaho best practices, the INSPIRE Governing Board will review and adopt the *Idaho Special Education Manual, September 2001* (and any future updates of this manual) as its special education policy.

Specifically, INSPIRE will provide special education services as follows.

### **a. Identification/Evaluation**

- **Coordination/Location:** INSPIRE will designate one staff member as its Child Find coordinator, who together with Connections Academy special education staff will conduct Child Find coordination and location activities. These activities shall include coordination with appropriate state and local organizations and agencies, as well as ensuring public awareness both inside and outside the INSPIRE community through outreach each fall about INSPIRE special education services and procedures.
- **Screening:** The INSPIRE principal and special education staff, together with the Connections Academy special education team, will regularly review assessment results and other data to identify any possible special education needs among INSPIRE students.
- **Prereferral:** The INSPIRE staff will form a Child Study team consisting of teachers, special education teacher, principal, and Connections Academy specialists to handle all prereferrals, which may be made by teachers, parents, or others. The Child Study team will determine if the student's needs can be met through curriculum modifications and interventions or if a formal referral for special education evaluation is warranted. If the former, the teacher then implements and documents suggested modifications, lesson adaptations, and alternative instructional strategies, as well as the student's level of success with each.

- Referral: If the Child Study team suspects that a student requires special educational services, the following procedures are implemented:
  - o The INSPIRE teacher consults with the principal and Connections Academy Special Education Director to complete an official special education referral. The parent is notified of this referral.
  - o Parental consent for the student evaluation is obtained and the appropriate evaluations are arranged. Parents are sent a copy of *Procedural Safeguards*.
  - o Parent is invited to the interdisciplinary Child Study team meeting to review the assessment results. The team determines if the student has a disability and which least-restrictive special education services are required.
  - o Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meeting is scheduled -at the INSPIRE office, at another mutually agreeable site, or by telephone -and the parents are invited to attend. IEP goals are formulated with parental consent.
  - o IEP is implemented.

### **b. Programming**

Since INSPIRE is a program focused on individualization, flexibility and personalization it is often a very good fit for students with special needs. INSPIRE can be an appropriate setting for students with special needs by providing:

- 1:1 individualized instruction
- A team of adults focused on student success
- Ongoing consultation with special educators and certified teachers to assist with adapting and modifying assignments to meet specific student needs
- Personalized Learning Plans
- A safe and directed environment
- Reduced environmental distractions
- Frequent progress checks, evaluations and reports
- Flexible schedule that allows for students to move at their own pace
- Ability to separate academics from socialization
- Recommendations for/provision of software (e.g., keyboarding or speech recognition software) to facilitate communication, organization and skill development and to address special needs.
- INSPIRE may provide an alternative program for approved grade levels.

These factors, along with the presence of a caring and committed adult - the learning coach - enable the regular INSPIRE program to provide programs for the large majority of students with special learning needs in the least restrictive environment as required by the *Idaho Special Education Manual, September 2001*. This is accomplished through the implementation of specific instructional approaches and learning strategies via a consultative service model, an approach that is already successfully demonstrated in other virtual schools. With specific guidance and specialized consultation from a certified special educator, learning coaches are able to utilize specific strategies and deliver individualized instruction in a much more personalized manner than is possible in many other settings.

This model requires good communication between the special educator, the learning coach, and the student, but proves to be highly effective for students that require individualized instruction.

Some students also have specific needs that will require additional direct services (such as speech and occupational therapy, etc.). If it is determined that INSPIRE is a good educational fit for these students, INSPIRE will work with local school districts and other service providers to secure the services mandated by the IEPs (refer to 26d, Services, below for more information on securing related services).

**c. Individual Education Plans (IEP)**

L Development: See above.

11. Review: All families applying to INSPIRE must disclose if their child has an IEP in place. During the enrollment process INSPIRE will review the existing IEP and take one of the following actions:
  - The IEP already reflects a virtual environment, and the student continues through the enrollment process with the existing, compliant IEP.
  - The INSPIRE special education staff feels the student's needs can be appropriately met in the least restrictive environment in a virtual setting, but the IEP does not reflect such a placement. The student continues with the enrollment process, and within the first 90 days of school an IEP conference is held by the INSPIRE team to revise the IEP and document the student's official change of placement.
  - The IEP does not reflect a virtual placement, and the INSPIRE special education staff does not feel that the student's needs will be appropriately met in the least restrictive environment with a virtual setting. INSPIRE refers the student back to his or her current school/resident district to secure a setting in which the IEP can be effectively implemented.

To support enrolled students with IEPs in an ongoing manner, INSPIRE will:

- Provide Annual Reviews of the IEP including a review of student progress within the existing IEP, creation of new IEP goals; and obtaining parent consent for and approval of new IEP.
- Provide a qualified administrator to oversee IEP meetings.
- Participate in Tri-annual Reviews, in which students are formally reassessed every three years

In order to make efficient use of staff resources, IEP meetings may be held at the INSPIRE office, at another mutually agreeable site, or by telephone. Specific arrangements will be made on a case-by-case basis and will be in accordance with all applicable law

111. Revision: See above.

**d. Services**

Although most special education services can be delivered within INSPIRE's consultative model (as described in 26b above), the school also provides a variety of additional related services to students with special needs. In accordance with each student's IEP, INSPIRE will secure any IEP-mandated related services by contracting with local school districts or private service providers. Such services may include, but are not limited to, speech• language therapy, occupational therapy, or even specialized direct resource instruction (if specifically required by the IEP). The school then facilitates arrangements between the

families and service providers to ensure that proper scheduling, facilities use, and consistent student attendance occurs. Such service models have been successfully implemented by existing virtual schools in Idaho and by Connections Academy virtual schools in other states, as evidenced by sample contracts in Exhibit H.

Specific services will be arranged once the INSPIRE charter has been approved and the actual needs of enrolled INSPIRE students have been determined based on IEP review. However, the INSPIRE team has had initial discussions with selected school districts around Idaho to begin assessing where services may be available through districts and where private arrangements will need to be made. In these initial discussions, for example, Boise School District and Coeur D'Alene School District have both confirmed their interest in and ability to provide services to INSPIRE students on a contract basis. Idaho Falls School District has indicated that it cannot provide such services itself, but has referred the INSPIRE team to a credible private provider in the area from whom services can be contracted. Based on the specific needs of enrolled students, the INSPIRE and Connections Academy special education staffs will conduct similar discussions with both school districts and private providers in the immediate geographic area of each student in need of services, and expects to execute contracts similar to those shown in Exhibit H.

**e. Discipline Policy**

As noted above, the INSPIRE Governing Board is expected to adopt the *Idaho Special Education Manual, September 2001* (and any future updates of this manual), including its discipline provisions, as its special education policy.

Discipline of students with special needs is also described in Element 19, above.

**f. Budget**

INSPIRE will have LEA status for purposes of seeking federal funding, a significant portion of which will be sought for special education services. From Year 1 forward, INSPIRE intends to have at least one teacher on staff who has special education certifications, and will be fully supported by the Connections Academy Director of Special Education. As enrollment grows, the school may employ one or more local specialists who will coordinate IEP development, review and revisions and assist teachers in making necessary curriculum modifications.

The budget projection on the following page provides INSPIRE's estimated special education costs, based on an assumption of 12% of total ADA classified as special education with a distribution of specific special education needs based on experience in other Connections Academy schools of similar size.

ESTIMATED BUDGET FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Enrollment - Total	520	1,040	1,560	2,080	2,925
ADA (95% attendance)	494	988	1,482	1,976	2,779
Special Education Enrollment	59	119	178	237	333
SPECIFIC NEEDS - ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF STUDENTS (based on Connections Academy schools nationally)					
COST OF SERVICES (based on Connections Academy schools nationally)					
Autism	\$ 16,379	\$ 32,757	\$ 49,136	\$ 65,515	\$ 92,130
Emotionally Impaired	\$ 86,348	\$ 172,697	\$ 259,045	\$ 345,393	\$ 485,709
Gifted	\$ 17,435	\$ 34,871	\$ 52,306	\$ 69,741	\$ 98,074
Hearing Impaired	\$ 13,944	\$ 27,888	\$ 41,832	\$ 55,776	\$ 78,434
Mental Retardation	\$ 39,334	\$ 78,668	\$ 118,002	\$ 157,336	\$ 221,254
Multiple Disabilities	\$ 17,520	\$ 35,040	\$ 52,560	\$ 70,079	\$ 98,549
Other Health Impaired	\$ 11,515	\$ 23,030	\$ 34,545	\$ 46,061	\$ 64,773
Physical Disability	\$ 26,139	\$ 52,278	\$ 78,417	\$ 104,556	\$ 147,032
Specific Learning Disability	\$ 386,572	\$ 773,144	\$ 1,159,716	\$ 1,546,287	\$ 2,174,467
Speech/Language	\$ 66,870	\$ 133,739	\$ 200,609	\$ 267,478	\$ 376,141
TBI	\$ 14,421	\$ 28,841	\$ 43,262	\$ 57,683	\$ 81,117
Total Cost of Special Ed	\$ 696,476	\$ 1,392,953	\$ 2,089,429	\$ 2,785,905	\$ 3,917,680
Regular Per Pupil Funding (est. \$5,000 per student)	\$ 296,400	\$ 592,800	\$ 889,200	\$ 1,185,600	\$ 1,667,250
Special Education Funds Required	\$ 400,076	\$ 800,153	\$ 1,200,229	\$ 1,600,305	\$ 2,250,430

**g. Transportation**

It is anticipated that many INSPIRE special education students will require modified curriculum and instructional strategies to meet their IEPs, which means that their transportation needs will be limited to bringing the school services to their homes via technology. For students who require outside services, such as speech therapy or occupational therapy, INSPIRE will arrange for these services to be provided within convenient driving distance of the students' homes; parents will be expected to provide transportation to these services, with reimbursement for mileage available from the school consistent with Idaho Code § 33-1503. If parents are unable to provide necessary transportation due to economic need or other circumstances, INSPIRE will work with the family to provide for alternative transportation (such as appropriately insured and certified local medical van service). Estimated transportation costs are included in the budget above.

**26. Describe the manner in which gifted and talented students will be served including a plan for identification and service.**

INSPIRE will use its placement process, parent input, and teacher observation to identify gifted and talented students, which as defined in IDAPA 08.02.03.999 and Idaho Code 33-2001 are those students "possessing demonstrated or potential abilities that give evidence of high performing capabilities in intellectual, creative, specific academic or leadership areas, or ability in the performing or visual arts and who require services or activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop such capabilities."

INSPIRE's Personalized Learning approach will ensure that gifted and talented students are provided with the most appropriate curriculum, pacing, and teaching approach from day one. INSPIRE teachers work closely with Connections Academy curriculum specialists and learning coaches to assure a steady flow of enrichment activities for these students.

In the INSPIRE virtual environment, students are able to work significantly above grade level and pursue their special talents and interests without fear of ostracism or other negative social repercussions that gifted students sometimes face in a more traditional school setting.

**27. Describe the manner by which Limited English Proficiency services will be provided.**

INSPIRE will utilize required criteria and procedures to identify students who are Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and meet their learning needs.

During the enrollment process, the parents of all incoming INSPIRE students will be asked to indicate the language(s) spoken in their home; Connections Academy enrollment counselors may also inquire about language learning needs while facilitating completion of the enrollment process for incoming families. Students who are identified through this process as possibly needing language assistance will be tested using a standardized English language proficiency test such as Language Assessment Scales or the Language Proficiency Testing Series to verify the need.

INSPIRE anticipates that a portion of its LEP students can be very effectively served by the basic INSPIRE program. The individualized pace of the program allows students to move more quickly through subjects where language is not a factor and spend more time on reading and writing activities. A Connections Academy curriculum specialist with LEP/ESL training is available to work with INSPIRE teachers, learning coaches and students to adapt the core material for LEP students and provide appropriate supplemental resources, including various technologies that can facilitate language acquisition.

To meet the needs of LEP students with less English speaking proficiency, Connections Academy will deploy a more comprehensive English as a Second Language (ESL) instructional approach, including adapted materials for students and parents and special training for teachers certified to teach ESL. Additional services may be provided through programs already in place for public school students.

## **28. Describe facilities to be used by the school.**

As a virtual charter school, INSPIRE will not require a physical facility for day-to-day learning. Students will work from the setting of their families' choice, such as the home or a supervised community location.

INSPIRE does anticipate leasing permanent office space to serve as a "teaching center" where administrative and teaching staff will work and where families may periodically meet with staff and use school resources. The facility selected will be in an attractive and safe area in the Boise metropolitan area (possibly on the campus of Boise State University) providing good access for administrators and teachers and any students or parents who visit the school. The facility will have a certificate of occupancy, be air-conditioned, heated and illuminated with fluorescent lights, provide male and female bathrooms and parking, will be handicapped accessible, and will be fully equipped with sprinklers and other fire safety equipment.

The facility will provide the necessary infrastructure to support the required computer network. Should there be a need for further renovations, they will be made in compliance with applicable building and safety codes and will be completed prior to the beginning of the school year.

The INSPIRE budget includes funds for lease of such a facility, estimated at current market prices. INSPIRE has also included a budget provision for contracting for cleaning service for its administrative offices. Facility maintenance will be the responsibility of the commercial space provider.

**29. Outline the manner in which administrative services of the school are to be provided.**

INSPIRE intends to contract with an educational management organization that has a proven track record in providing administrative support services to virtual public schools across the nation and that also provides the Connections Academy curriculum and technology services described above.

All contracting will be conducted by the Governing Board consistent with the provisions of Idaho Code §§ 33-601 and -507, as well as all Idaho statutory provisions regarding conflict of interest and ethical provisions. The Governing Board will execute a detailed management contract with the selected educational management organization, which will be expected to provide a complete range of services from coordination of school start-up activities, recruiting of staff for Governing Board approval, planning and coordination of student outreach/marketing, grant-writing, financial and payroll management, human resources management, and facilitation of financial and program audits.

The management contract will detail those services which the management organization will provide directly and those services for which it will serve as a payment agent for the Governing Board. The contract will also include specific terms for performance by the management organization and a process by which the contract can be terminated for non-performance or breach.

The contracted management organization will present a summary of each charge every month, provide monthly financial statements as outlined in the financial statement section and will also provide an updated annual forecast to the Governing Board at each of its meetings.

All certificated employees will be hired by the Board and will be employees of INSPIRE. In general all classified employees will be employees of INSPIRE. In employing these individuals, the Board will be in strict compliance with Idaho Code §§33-513, -514, -514A, -515, -515A, -516, -517-517A and -518.

**30. Describe potential civil liability effects upon the school and upon the district.**

As a public charter school, INSPIRE has the same civil liability as a traditional public school district, and its employees, trustees and officers shall enjoy the same immunities as employees, trustees and officers of traditional public school districts and other public schools. INSPIRE will have appropriate insurance coverage for such liability (see Exhibit I).

INSPIRE is seeking its public charter school authorization from the Idaho Charter School Commission, which shall have no liability for the acts, omissions, debts or other obligations of a public charter school, except as may be provided in the charter. No local public school district shall have liability for INSPIRE's acts, omissions, debts or other obligations.

**31. Include documentation of organization under the Idaho Nonprofit Corporation Act.**

See Exhibit B, Articles of Incorporation and initial Bylaws.

**32. Include documentation regarding insurance for liability and property loss.**

See Exhibit I for certificate of insurance documenting coverage for INSPIRE and the State Board of Education for liability and property loss.

INSPIRE will also purchase insurance for Errors and Omissions as recommended in Idaho Code, Section 33-5204(2). Funds for this insurance coverage are included in the budget line item for liability insurance.

**33. Describe the manner by which eligible students from the charter school shall be allowed to participate in dual enrollment in non-charter schools within the District as provided for in Chapter 2, Title 33, Idaho Code.**

According to Title 33, Section 203 of the Idaho Code, the parent or guardian of a child of school age who is enrolled in a public charter school shall be allowed to enroll the student in a public school for dual enrollment purposes.

Since the INSPIRE program is full-time and provides a comprehensive, integrated curriculum, it is anticipated that such requests will be for supplementary and enrichment courses, and will be handled by INSPIRE on a case-by-case basis.

INSPIRE will establish a clear policy and procedure by which INSPIRE students may request dual enrollment and by which INSPIRE will work out financial arrangements with the public school district(s) in which its students may dual-enroll.

**34. Describe the compact and contiguous attendance area of the charter school.**

As a virtual charter school, INSPIRE will serve the entire state of Idaho. See Element 17 for a discussion of how INSPIRE will inform families in every region of the state about enrollment opportunities at the school.

### **35. Outline transportation services for students, including estimated first year cost.**

Students at INSPIRE will not require transportation services for regular school activities. INSPIRE expects to collect "transportation equivalent" funds to cover the cost of transporting the virtual charter school to all of its students as provided for in SB 1443 passed in 2004, but will include such funding in its budget only pending consultation with the Department of Education regarding the process for doing so.

While INSPIRE will help facilitate local extracurricular and recreational activities among INSPIRE students and their families, the families will be responsible for providing their own transportation for these activities. Any parent transporting students other than their own children in their car to school organized events will sign appropriate waivers/release forms and will provide proof of liability insurance to the school.

The only required school events that may require students to report somewhere other than their home or immediate neighborhood will be: a) special orientation sessions, and b) state standardized tests, which students will take at proctored locations.

INSPIRE families who do not have ready transportation to required face-to-face events and cannot be accommodated through parent carpools may request transportation assistance from the school. INSPIRE may provide such assistance either directly, by arranging for a vehicle, or indirectly, through reimbursement for public or private transport consistent with in lieu payment pursuant to Idaho Code § 33-1503.

INSPIRE proposes a budget of \$2,600 to cover its first year transportation costs as defined under Idaho Code § 33-5208(4). This fund does not include transportation for special education students to IEP-required outside service providers, nor does it include transportation for testing, as both of these are covered in other areas of the budget. Experience by Connections Academy virtual schools in other states suggests that the modest transportation funds budgeted will be sufficient to meet transportation needs described in this section.

If INSPIRE provides transportation for any special event, school administrators will assure that such transportation meets all applicable safety standards and bears any motor vehicle insurance required under Idaho law.

### **36. Outline provisions for Child Nutrition.**

Since students will attend INSPIRE from their homes, the school will not provide Child Nutrition or meal services. As a charter school, INSPIRE is not required to provide these services, and parents will be fully informed of this fact prior to their students' enrollment in the school so that they may make the best school choice for their family.

For purposes of demographic documentation, however, INSPIRE will request during the enrollment process that families who qualify for Free or Reduced Price Meals - based on past eligibility for these services or current family income - so identify themselves. The purpose of collecting this information is to ensure that the school will be prepared to arrange supplemental educational resources available to students and the school based on incidence of poverty. These resources may range from Title J services to E-rate funding for school technology. Parents will be fully informed that volunteering this information will not entitle their family to meal service.

**37. Include a provision that ensures a policy of Internet safety for minors that includes the operation of a technology protection measure with respect to any of its computers with Internet access that protects against access through such computers to visual depictions that are obscene, child pornography, or harmful to minors (Children's Internet Protection Act).**

INSPIRE facilitates access to electronic mail, groupware, and the Internet via a provided computer and subsidized Internet connection. As shown in the budget table on page 60, the Year I cost for hardware for students is projected to be \$316,333, while the software cost (including student information system) is expected to be \$312,000.

As stated in the sample Parent/Learning Coach Agreement (see Exhibit G), "The Parent shall take full responsibility for the student's use of the Internet, and hereby hold the school harmless for any actions or activities resulting from the student's use."

While the parent/learning coach is ultimately responsible for acceptable and safe computer use, the school requires that parents and students agree to follow a set of acceptable use guidelines. Consequently, before using the school computer to access electronic mail, groupware, or the Internet, all students under the age of 18 must obtain parental permission and must sign the *Internet and Electronic Mail Acceptable Use Policy and Permission Form* described below and return it to the school principal. This form will be provided prior to a student receiving his or her computer. Students who are 18 and older may sign their own forms.

The INSPIRE *Internet and Electronic Mail Acceptable Use Policy and Permission Form* forbids the following computer or Internet activities:

- Sending or displaying offensive messages or pictures
- Sending or displaying racist, prejudice, or discriminatory messages or pictures
- Using obscene language
- Harassing, insulting, or attacking others
- Damaging computers, computer systems, or computer networks
- Violating copyright laws
- Using another's password (with the exception of parents, students, or learning coaches assisting students)
- Trespassing in another's folders, work, or files
- Accessing or sending pornographic material
- Intentionally wasting limited resources
- Employing the computer for commercial purposes.

Violation of any of the above may result in the loss of a computer as well as other disciplinary or legal action.

The Learning Management System includes several unique and proprietary features designed for student safety:

- Webmail: INSPIRE families do not use ISP e-mail services that subject them to unsafe content and spam. Rather, they use a completely enclosed mail system that only permits communication with other families in the school and with the school staff and technology support team. Parents can further restrict access by defining if their students can receive mail from other students.
- Virtual library: The school provides a "virtual" library that contains pre-screened content that provides a variety of safe and secure educational resources.
- Pre-screened links: Any lessons that contain links to outside web sites are all pre-screened for appropriate content.
- Filter software: Parents are instructed on how to adjust their browser's security settings in order to restrict access to inappropriate content. Parents may also request at no charge a filtering program that also contains further safeguards including the ability to restrict the student's time online.

However, it is important to note that students can go outside the bounds of the Learning Management System if permitted by their parents. The school believes that it is important to permit parents to make this choice because of the rich variety of material that is available outside the pre-screened content. Families should be warned that INSPIRE is not able to ensure that any inappropriate material on the Internet will not be accessible by students.

All computers provided by the school are configured with anti-virus and anti-popup protection software and technical support is available to assist with its use. Parents are also given guidelines to assist them with selecting an Internet Service Provider <sup>5</sup> that provides adequate protective measures for inappropriate content.

The parent will be ultimately responsible for the student's use of the Internet and for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using media and information sources. To that end, the school will support and respect each family's right to decide how to manage access for their children. INSPIRE strongly recommends that student Internet time be supervised.

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<sup>5</sup> Families receive reimbursement for their ISP but are able to select their own provider.

38. **A virtual charter school that is approved by the school district board of trustees must include a statement declaring if the school wishes to be considered an LEA for purposes of federal formula funding.**

INSPIRE is a virtual charter school that is petitioning for approval by the Idaho Charter School Commission rather than a school district. The school does wish to be considered an LEA for purposes of federal formula funding.

**39. Tracking form signed by local board chair and stamped with SBOE tracking number.**

Attached as cover sheet before Table of Charter Elements.

#### 40. Budget

The following tables outline the projected balance sheet and cash flow for INSPIRE with the addition of alternative programming.

<b>Estimated Budget for Alternative Education</b>			
School Year	19-20	20-21	21-22
Alt Ed Enrollment	36	72	108
<b>Service Level (FTE)</b>			
Life Coach/Mentor	1.0	2.0	3.0
Academic Intervention	2.0	4.0	6.0
Total Staff Equivalent	3.0	6.0	9.0
Student-Staff Ratio	12	12	12
<b>Funding</b>			
Funding for Alt Ed	\$298,800	\$597,600	\$896,400
<b>Compensation Expense</b>			
Total Compensation (est.)	\$190,712	\$392,866	\$606,977
---			
<i>Reference:</i>			
Per Pupil Funding	\$5,616		
Alt Ed Funding	\$8,300		
Other provider service costs TBD			

<b>Compensation Expenses for Alternative Education</b>					
School Year		<b>19-20</b>	<b>20-21</b>	<b>21-22</b>	
Alt Ed Enrollment*		36	72	108	
<b>Alt Ed Needs</b>					
Life Coach/Mentor		1.00	2.00	3.00	
Academic Intervention		2.00	4.00	6.00	
Total		3.00	6.00	9.00	
<b>Base Compensation</b>					
Life Coach/Mentor		\$47,300	\$48,719	\$50,181	<b>3.00% Merit</b>
Academic Intervention		\$42,800	\$44,084	\$45,407	
<b>Compensation</b>					
Life Coach/Mentor		\$47,300	\$97,438	\$150,542	
Academic Intervention		\$85,600	\$176,336	\$272,439	
Total		\$132,900	\$273,774	\$422,981	
Benefits/Pension/Taxes	43.5%	\$57,812	\$119,092	\$183,997	
<b>Total Compensation</b>		<b>\$190,712</b>	<b>\$392,866</b>	<b>\$606,977</b>	

## Appendix D: IPCSC Closure Protocol



## Closure Protocol

Idaho Public Charter School Commission

514 West Jefferson Street, Ste. 303

Boise, Idaho 83702

208-332-1561

[pcsc@osbe.idaho.gov](mailto:pcsc@osbe.idaho.gov)

Alan Reed, Chairman

Jenn Thompson, Director

## Purpose

This document provides guidance on the public charter school closure process.

## Authority

Title 33, Chapter 52 of Idaho Code, known as the Charter School Act provides for public charter school operations based on a contractual agreement between a charter school board of directors and a state authorized chartering entity, such as the Idaho Public Charter School Commission (IPCSC).

Operating contracts, known as Performance Certificates are granted by state authorized chartering entities to the governing board of a non-profit corporation that serves as the charter holder. Performance certificates are limited to five-year terms.

Closure protocol is enacted when:

- an authorized chartering entity chooses to non-renew a school's charter pursuant to I.C. § 33-5209B;
- an authorized chartering entity chooses to exercise its right to revoke a charter pursuant to I.C. § 33-5209C; or
- a charter holder chooses to relinquish its charter by approval of a resolution.

Each authorized chartering entity is required to maintain a closure protocol and is tasked with oversight of the closure process.

If closure is due to an IPCSC nonrenewal or revocation decision, written notice will be issued to the school within 14 days of the decision and this closure protocol must begin within 5 days.

## Roles

**Authorizer:** the authorized chartering entity is responsible to maintain closure protocol and to oversee the closure process.

**Charter Holder:** the charter holder is responsible to ensure that all closure tasks are complete and all deadlines are met. The school is responsible for any and all costs associated with closure.

## Note

Please note that every closure situation is different. This guidance document may need to be expanded or adjusted to accommodate the specifics of a particular closure.

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## I. Closure Protocol Team

### A. Initial Meeting

within 5 business days of the date on which written notice of closure is issued, a meeting of the closure protocol team will be held.

### B. Team Members

The Closure Protocol Team shall meet at least once a month between the date of the decision to non-renew, revoke, or relinquish the charter and the final dissolution of the board. Meetings shall be organized and chaired by the “team lead”. The team lead is also responsible for compiling meeting minutes and all documentation for the final closure report.

Required members of this team shall include:

1. The school’s Board Chair;
2. The school’s Lead Administrator;
3. The school’s Business Manager;
4. The IPCSC Director
5. A Team Lead (appointed by the IPCSC Director); and
6. The State Department of Education’s School Choice Coordinator.
7. Additional members may be added to the closure protocol team by mutual agreement of the required members.

### C. Subcommittees

1. Subcommittees shall be established for the purpose of managing closure tasks in the following areas:
  - i. Communication – student, teacher, family
  - ii. Financial – vendors and assets
  - iii. Business – employer and corporation
  - iv. Records – student and employee records

## D. Meeting Agenda

The meeting agenda for the initial meeting of the closure protocol team shall include the following:

1. Review of the closure protocol guidance document;
2. Review of the final closure report template;
3. Review the roles and responsibilities of each party and subcommittee throughout the process;
4. Assign liaisons from both the school and the IPCSC to the Closure Protocol Team and any subcommittees;
5. Establish due dates for all tasks listed in Section I.E of these procedures; and
6. Review notification letter drafted by IPCSC Staff.

## E. Important Dates

Due dates to be established at the initial meeting of the Closure Protocol Team shall include the following:

1. The date of the school's last allowable draw on public funds;
2. The date on which the school shall cease to provide services to students;
3. The date by which records to be retained beyond the closure date are to be transferred the authorizer;
4. The date by which all assets purchased with federal dollars must be transferred to the authorizer for redistribution to other charter schools;
5. the date on which all employee contracts are to be ended and all communication on behalf of the school must cease;
6. The date on which benefits will end;
7. The date by which the final audit must be completed;
8. The date by which all financial activity must be ended, including cutting the final checks and closing all bank accounts;

9. The date by which all W2s will be issued for the school's final operating year; and
10. The date by which the non-profit corporation must be dissolved.

## Communication

### A. Initial Stakeholder Notification

1. Within 7 business days of the date written notice of closure is issued, the school is responsible to issue a letter (drafted by the IPCSC) notifying stakeholders of closure. This letter shall minimally include:
  - a. Where and when the final order will be posted online for transparency of the reasons for closure;
  - b. The last date of student services;
  - c. Transfer procedures;
  - d. Explanation of the appeal process and when a decision regarding an appeal would be published; and
  - e. Contact information for the school's administrator and the IPCSC.
2. The school may choose to include a supplemental letter drafted by the school's board, and if so, such draft must be provided to the IPCSC prior to distribution to stakeholders.
3. The school is responsible to distribute the IPCSC's letter (and the school board issued supplemental letter, if applicable) to the following recipients:
  - a. All Parents of current students and all parents currently on a waitlist;
  - b. All Teachers, Staff, and Volunteers;
  - c. All Vendors with whom the school has an active contract or has engaged with in the past 12 months;
  - d. All Lease and Loan/bond holders; and
  - e. Any Educational Services Providers with whom the school contracts.
4. The authorizer is responsible to issue a letter informing stakeholders of the closure situation to the following recipients:

- a. All potentially impacted school districts and charter schools;
  - b. The State Department of Education;
  - c. The State Board of Education;
  - d. The Office of the Governor;
  - e. The Public Employment Retirement Service of Idaho;
  - f. The chairpersons of the House and Senate Education committees; and
  - g. The Senators and Representatives serving the state legislature on behalf of the district in which the school maintains student occupied facilities or business offices.
5. Within 7 days of the date written notice of closure is issued, the IPCSC's letter informing stakeholders of the closure situation shall be posted in a prominent location on the school's website and the IPCSC's website.

## B. Staff Meeting

1. Within 7 days of the date written notice of closure is issued, the school's administrator, board chair, and business manager shall hold a meeting with all staff to discuss the following:
  - a. Media contact protocol  
The Director of the IPCSC is the authorized media contact for the IPCSC. The school is encouraged to establish a single point of contact to manage public relations on behalf of the school.
  - b. Maintenance of normalcy (to the best possible level) for students through the last day of student services  
All instructional and student services are required to be provided in full through the last day the school is allowed to provide such services. The student experience should remain as normal as possible through this process. It is recommended that the school provide guidance for teachers and staff early-on to ensure common language and tone is used when discussing this situation with students and families.
  - c. End of Employment Impact  
This date is established by the Closure Protocol Team. When determining the end of contract dates, please consider the impact of this date on health

insurance and PERSI. When at all possible, August 31<sup>st</sup> is recommended as this will allow teachers who re-employ at another school the best opportunity for uninterrupted health insurance coverage. However, this decision must be balanced with the urgency of the closure and the school's obligation to spend as little as necessary during the closure period.

2. The meeting agenda for this staff meeting should include the following:
  - a. Notification of closure timeline and timeline of parallel appeal if the school has chosen to or is considering appealing the closure decision.
  - b. Review of media protocol and how to discuss the issue with parents and students.
  - c. Date of last paychecks and whether/who will remain on staff after end of student services and end of contract dates.
  - d. Timeline for more information regarding sick leave, vacation time, and health insurance; Cobra may not be available when the charter school providing the original health insurance ceases to exist.
  - e. Timeline for more information regarding any impacts to PERSI; Employees whose last place of work prior to retirement was the school being closed may lose the ability to transfer accrued sick leave into funds used for medical coverage.
  - f. Timeline for winding-down and transition of duties, including, but not limited to facility access and security, access to email and software, hardware returns, and asset management of furniture, fixtures, equipment, and curriculum.
  - g. Social emotional services for staff and students if the school has chosen to make such available; We acknowledge that closure can be traumatic for staff and students. Schools are encouraged to consider making additional counseling services available.
  - h. Assistance with employment transition for staff (such as access to hiring fairs or letters of recommendation) if the school has chosen to make such available.

## C. Ongoing Communication

1. Additional communication with stakeholders will be necessary throughout the closure process.
2. The Communication subcommittee is responsible for ensuring that any necessary communication is timely and accurate.

## F. Financial Dissolution

### A. Expenses

1. Within 15 business days of the date on which written notification of closure was issued a meeting shall be held between the school's business manager, the IPCSC's Finance Manager, and the Team Lead.
2. Additional attendees (such as the school's auditor) may be invited to the meeting by mutual agreement of both required attendees. Any related costs are the responsibility of the school.
3. No later than the start of the scheduled meeting, the school's business manager shall make the following available to the IPCSC:
  - a. A list of every vendor the school has paid in the last 12 months;
  - b. A copy of all arrangements with vendors including: contracts, service agreements, grants, and/or MOUs with all services providers that are currently active or that have been active in the past 12 months;
  - c. A copy of all lease agreements and all long-term loans;
  - d. A list of all insurance policies held by the school (including liability, directors and officers, worker's comp, etc.), including company, policy number, and coverage specifics; and
  - e. All bank statements for the previous 12 months.
4. The meeting agenda for this meeting shall include the following:
  - a. A review of statute, rule, policy, and regulations related to closure as presented by the Closure Team Lead.  
This part of the discussion should consider requirements of the IRS, the Department

of Labor, the Government Accounting Standards Board, as well as the Idaho Charter School Act and rules and policy established by the State Board of Education and the State Department of Education.

- b. A review of projected cash flow through end of operations as presented by the school's Business Manager.  
There will be time to revise this initial projection as closure progresses, and the numbers are expected to shift throughout the process, but this exercise establishes a starting place. Please consider the last allowable draw of funds, payroll through end of contracts, and note that there may be additional closing costs, such as a PERSI buy out, storage costs, or penalties on early lease termination.
- c. Development of a plan for immediately reducing spending to necessities only, which may require board action to suspend or change policies to allow for changes in who has spending authority and at what amounts.
- d. Prioritization of payment of anticipated expenditures, pursuant to Idaho Code.
- e. Documentation of a list of items requiring follow-up and who is responsible for the workload or costs.
- f. Establishment of approximate deadlines for when each account is to be closed.

5. Following the initial meeting, the school's Business Manager shall be responsible to provide the following documentation:

- a. Verification that the school's account has been paid in full with each vendor as accounts are closed;
- b. Verification that the school has met with PERSI and has established a final transmission date;
- c. Documentation that any outstanding PERSI fees are paid;
- d. Verification that the school has met with the board approved auditor and has established a final audit timeline. Note that the timing of this audit may be later than usual; and
- e. Verification of end dates for leases and liability coverage (including property and directors/officers).

## B. Accounting of Assets

- i. The IPCSC shall provide to the school a written guidance document with regard to the sale and dissolution of assets.
- ii. The school shall be responsible to provide the IPCSC and the SDE with a full inventory of all physical assets owned by the corporation within 30 days of the date on which the notice of closure was issued.
- iii. The inventory shall include:
  - a. A description of the item;
  - b. The fund with which each item was purchased; and
  - c. An estimate of the current value of the item.
- D. The Team Lead, the IPCSC's Finance Manager, a representative from the SDE, and the school's Business Manager shall meet to review this inventory within 15 days of receipt of the inventory, and may verify accuracy via thorough on-site review.

## C. Dissolution of Assets

1. All viable special education testing materials shall be distributed to the SDE for redistribution to charter schools based on the agency's determination of need.
2. Property owned by the ESP will be claimed by the ESP. The lease by which this equipment was provided to the school must include an itemized inventory and shall be provided to the IPCSC.
3. Any items purchased with federal funds (excluding special education testing materials) shall be returned to the IPCSC for redistribution to other charter schools. The IPCSC shall retain record of what was received and to whom it was redistributed.
4. The school is responsible to arrange for delivery of assets in an organized and well-labeled manner.
5. All assets purchased with state funds shall be liquidated to the greatest degree possible. Please see the IPCSC's guidance on the sale and dissolution of assets for procedural expectations.
6. When all assets have been redistributed and liquidated, and all creditors have been paid, any remaining funds shall be returned to the Public School Income Fund via the State Department of Education.

## D. Reporting

1. The school shall ensure that an audit completed by an independent auditor is conducted, the audit report is approved by the school's board, and submitted to both the State Department of Education and the authorizer.
2. The school shall ensure that all documentation required to dissolve the school as a business is filed with the IRS, including dissolution of the 501c3.
3. After the sale of assets, and the all checks are cut, any remaining funds shall be returned to the State Department of Education for distribution to operational schools.
4. File final tax reports.
5. Issue W2s for previous tax year.

## IV – Records Management

### i. Records Retention Procedures

1. The school's Lead Administrator is responsible to ensure the proper retention and destruction of records in accordance with the State of Idaho's records retention schedule.
2. The public charter school shall make every effort to transfer all active student records (including the cumulative file and the special education file) to the student's next school of choice prior to the date on which records are scheduled to transfer to the authorizer.
3. The public charter school shall ensure that every student file (active or inactive) includes an official transcript (signed, embossed, etc.) or final report card and a record of where and when the student's records were transferred out of the public charter school's care. This information shall be compiled in a single spreadsheet.
4. The public charter school shall ensure that all records to be transferred to the authorizer (cumulative and special education) are scanned into an electronic format. Costs incurred are the responsibility of the school.

5. The public charter school shall ensure that all records are transferred to the authorizer via a secure file transfer protocol.
6. No employee or former employee of the school shall retain copies or have access to student, employee, or financial records after the employee's end of contract date.

## ii. Records to be Retained

### 1. Student Records:

- a. Student cumulative files shall be retained for five years beyond the student's exit date.
- b. Student special education files shall be retained for five years beyond the student's exit date.
- c. Official transcripts or final report cards for all students who attended the school shall be retained permanently and shall include the name and address of the student, the name of the student's parent(s)/guardian(s), the student's date of birth, the courses attempted by the student and grades earned by the student.
- d. Record of student records transfer shall be retained permanently;

### 2. Personnel Records:

- a. Personnel files shall be retained for five years beyond the employee's termination date.
- b. Personnel files shall include the name, address, and contact information of the employee; employment agreements or contracts signed by the employee, verification of certification (if applicable), and all employee evaluations. No other documentation shall be retained.

### 3. Financial Records:

- a. Monthly expenditure reports for the five years preceding the school's closure date shall be retained. Records shall be destroyed after five years.
- b. Monthly deposit records for the five years preceding the school's closure date. Records shall be destroyed after five years.
- c. All bids received and contracts awarded in the five years preceding the school's closure date. Records shall be destroyed after five years.

- d. Medicaid reimbursement records for seven years prior to the school's closure date. Records shall be destroyed after seven years.
  - e. Bank statements for all accounts for five years preceding the school's closure date. Records shall be destroyed after five years.
  - f. Tax documents shall be retained for the seven years prior to the school's closure date. These documents include but are not limited to IRS forms 941 and 1099. Records shall be destroyed after seven years.
  - g. Annual financial audit reports and annual board approved budgets shall be retained permanently for all operational years. These documents are submitted to the IPCSC annually, and may not need to be re-submitted.
4. Governance Records:
- a. All meeting agendas shall be retained permanently.
  - b. All meeting minutes shall be retained permanently.
  - c. A complete copy of the most recent set of board policy shall be retained permanently.
  - d. A copy of the board bylaws and articles of incorporation shall be retained permanently.
5. School Culture Records
- a. The school's lead administrator shall be responsible to make arrangements for the permanent retention of all school newspapers, yearbooks, and student handbooks through the Idaho Historical Society. The school is responsible for all costs incurred.
6. Records Requests After Closure
- a. The IPCSC shall manage records requests for student transcripts and for personnel files after the school has closed.
  - b. The school shall ensure that the school's URL redirects to the IPCSC's records request page for a minimum of 3 years after the school's closure, at the school's expense.

## V. Governing Board

### iii. Final dissolution

#### 1. Final Board Meeting

- a. In accordance with OML notice a final meeting of the governing board and pursuant to I.C. § 30-30-1001, a vote to dissolve a nonprofit corporation shall be properly noticed and accompanied by the dissolution plan. In this case, the dissolution plan is the closure protocol, which should be near completion by the time this motion is made. This section of Idaho Code also requires that the agenda state that the purpose, or one of the purposes, of the meeting is to consider a resolution to dissolve of the non-profit corporation.
- b. I.C. § 33-5212 addresses the order in which payments shall be made, and state that any remaining assets after all creditors have been paid shall be distributed to the Public School Income Fund. This information should be incorporated into the dissolution motion as it is required to be noticed by the Non-Profit Corporation Act.
- c. A vote in favor of dissolution passes with a majority vote of the board directors.
- d. A copy of the resolution must be provided to the IPCSC with 24 hours of the vote.

#### 2. Meeting Agenda

- a. Approval of the financial audit report (if not already complete).
- b. Approval of any final contracts to be paid (i.e. for the Business Manager to return at the end of the calendar year to prepare final tax documents and distribute to employees).
- c. Appointment of a designee to file dissolution of the school's 501c3 with the IRS and articles of dissolution with the Idaho Secretary of State.
- d. Appointment of a designee to complete any and all final activities that may be necessary.
- e. Signature of any final checks.

#### 3. Articles of Dissolution

- a. Pursuant to I.C. § 30-30-1003, after the dissolution has been authorized, a designee (identified in the dissolution plan) shall files articles of dissolution with the Idaho

Secretary of State. These articles shall minimally include:

- i. The name of the corporation;
  - ii. The date dissolution was authorized;
  - iii. A statement that dissolution was approved by a sufficient vote of the board.
- b. A corporation is effectively dissolved as of the date of its articles of dissolution.
  - c. The school shall provide a copy of the filed articles of dissolution to the IPCSC.
4. A dissolved corporation may continue its corporate existence but may not carry on any activities except those appropriate to wind up and liquidate its affairs.

## B. Claims against a dissolved Corporation

- iv. After the date on which the articles of dissolution are filed, the corporation may dispose of the known claims against it by sending written notice, pursuant to I.C. § 30-30-1005. Written notice must include:
  - a. A description of the information that must be included in a claim;
  - b. A mailing address where a claim may be sent;
  - c. The deadline, by which the dissolved corporation must receive the claim; and
  - d. State that the claim will be barred if not received by the deadline, which may not be fewer than one hundred twenty (120) days from the effective date of the written notice.
- v. The corporation must address any unknown claims against it by publishing a notice Pursuant to I.C. 30-30-1006. The notice must:
  1. Be published one (1) time in a newspaper of general circulation in the county where the dissolved corporation's principal office is or was located, or, if none in this state, in Ada county;
  2. Describe the information that must be included in a claim and provide a mailing address where the claim may be sent; and
  3. State that a claim against the corporation will be barred unless a proceeding to enforce the claim is commenced within five (5) years after publication of the notice.

- vi. Claims will be enforced if the corporation's assets have be distributed in liquidation to any party other than a creditor. A claim may be made by a creditor against the recipient, not to exceed the amount received by the recipient.

### C. Reporting

1. The school shall ensure that all state and federal reporting is complete prior to dissolution. Verification of completed reports shall be made by the IPCSC. Required reports include, but are not limited to the following:
  - a. ISEE final data upload including, but not limited to student, course, teachers, and financial data sets;
  - b. Federal programs final reporting;
  - c. Grant final reporting; and
  - d. The school shall ensure that dissolution of the charter holder's non-profit organization is filed with the secretary of state and shall provide the IPCSC with a copy of this filing;
2. The school shall ensure that the dissolution of the school's 501c3 is on file with the IRS and shall provide the IPCSC with a copy of this filing.

## VI. Final Closure Report Outline

Throughout the closure protocol process, the Closure Team Lead will collect the required documentation and build a final report. The final report will be permanently retained by IPCSC and posted on the IPCSC's website.

### i. Cover Sheet

1. A final closure report must include a cover sheet with the following information:
  - a. The legal name of the school;
  - b. The legal name of the charter holder;
  - c. The address(s) that the school occupied at time of closure;
  - d. Contact information for future questions;

- e. The following links and a statement that more information can be found at these locations,
  - i. [PCSC webpage for this school],
  - ii. [webpage for the meeting at which the charter was approved],
  - iii. [webpage for the meeting at which the charter was nonrenewed or revoked, if applicable], and
  - iv. [webpage for any related hearings]; and
- f. A description of where requests for student transcripts can be made after closure.
- g. A list of the complete closure protocol team.
- h. A list of the following key dates:
  - i. The date on which the charter was approved;
  - ii. The first and final dates on which the school was authorized to serve students;
  - iii. The date on which the school received its final distribution of state funding;
  - iv. The date on which teacher contracts ended; and
  - v. The date on which the charter holder's corporation was dissolved.

## B. Required Attachments, Redacted

1. Final IPCSC Closure Order
2. Final appeal decision (if applicable)
3. IPCSC Notification of Stakeholders Letter
4. List of all vendors, including the name and address of the vendor, a description of the services provided/purchased, and the date on which the IPCSC verified account closure.
5. A list of insurance coverages, including company and the last date of coverage (including health, liability, etc.)
6. A list of all contracts, service agreements, grants, and MOUs to be retained by the IPCSC, including verification of date received.
7. A list of all lease agreements and all long-term debt held by the school at the beginning of the closure protocol, including the company and amount.
8. Documentation of the termination of any leases or loans.
9. Final bank statements indicating account closure.

10. Expense reports for the 12 months preceding dissolution.
11. A copy of the final check cut to the SDE, if applicable.
12. Inventory of assets, including the fund with which each item was purchased, the date of purchase, the estimated value.
13. For assets purchased with federal dollars, also include the final recipient of the asset, and the date of transfer.
14. The charter holder's final dissolution resolution.
15. A copy of the articles of dissolution.
16. A copy of the 501c3 dissolution notification.
17. A copy of the newspaper notice to unknown claimants.
18. Meeting minutes from all meetings of the closure protocol team and all subcommittee meetings attended by the Closure Team Lead.
19. Any other documentation that may provide important details.